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A
SUCCESSFUL METHOD
OF TREATING
THE GOUT
BY BLISTERING.
[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.]



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A
SUCCESSFUL METHOD
OF TREATING
THE GOUT
BY BLISTERING.
WITH
AN INTRODUCTION,
CONSISTING OF
MISCELLANEOUS MATTER.

BY WILLIAM STEVENSON,
PHYSICIAN AT WELLS.

—— Dolor est Medicina Doloris.
The caustic thus the surgeon's hand applies,
The phlegmon kindles, and the blisters rise;
Life's injur'd operations to restore,
And plant Health general on a partial fore.

BATH: PRINTED BY R. CRUTTWELL;
AND SOLD BY
THE BOOKSELLERS OF BATH, AND BY E. AND C. DILLY,
POULTRY, LONDON.



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Preparing for the Press, by the Author hereof,

A N E S T I M A T E

O F T H E

POWERS of MEDICINE,

(the *Nervous, Alterative* Class chiefly)

I N T H E

C U R E of D I S E A S E S.

along with the manners of the people; and as these grew more civilized, effeminate, and luxurious, phyfic became a more intricate, complex, and laborious study, more interesting to society, and more lucrative to its professors. It is a melancholy fact in the history of our species, that vice and excess are the parents of industry and arts. Mankind, in the simplicity of their desires, and the fewness of their wants, had nothing to do but partake of the bounty of Nature spontaneously offered them. These, with the habitual exercise attendant on such a state, preserved their bodies from one half of those complaints that, in modern times, debilitate the constitution, and abbreviate life.

DISEASES are but constitutional efforts to throw off redundances from the system, more or less offending, by their degree of acrimony, in proportion to the time they have remained stagnating in the habit. These efforts (diseases) become the more frequent, according as luxury and excess load and obstruct the animal œconomy, by throwing into the circulation indigested, sharp, crude juices.

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If these efforts of Nature to unload and disencumber herself are not made at particular periods of life and seasons of the year, according as people overact the demands of necessary nourishment, by eating and drinking too much, (especially the former) it is remarkable that apoplexies and palsies suddenly attack and carry off patients, or render the misery of living more intolerable than death. The multiplication, therefore, of diseases, is in consequence of our multiplying the indulgences of life at table, eating and drinking more from habit and fashion, than the necessitous calls of hunger and thirst: whence doctors of all descriptions are likewise multiplied, and the art of healing is become endlessly involved, and difficult to acquire; insomuch, that a man may fall a sacrifice to some climacteric illness before he shall have academically or clinically qualified himself to undertake the cure of maladies. But is there not a mistake both in modern theory and practice? I think so, and that there is a simplicity, a unity in diseases little apprehended by the Faculty. This will appear more fully when the Gout comes under ob-

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servation.

ervation. In this place some farther general remarks would seem a proper introduction to the principal subject.

THE above medical axiom has been adopted on the principles of common sense, that sense alone the Almighty would not wish us to restrain. It was first suggested by that vivacity of discernment which penetrates farther into the nature of things in one auspicious moment, than the labour of investigation has ever been able to do in the progress of an age. It is at once a matter of fact, and the keenest satire: a matter of fact confirmed by the testimony of all times and nations; and a species of satire that wounds our feelings less from reading, than from every day's experience.

THAT life is short all men, the Philosopher, the Academic, the Legislator, the Man of Business, and the Man of Pleasure, confess and regret, though from very opposite principles and convictions.

Nihil tam prope, tam proculque.

THE Philosopher, after having revolved a sublime system of Nature in his thoughts, and outlined an imperfect draught of it on paper, to astonish and instruct the world; brought the golden God of Day, the silver Majesty of Night, and Saturn invironed by his Moons, to move in lines *almost* of his own drawing, in orbits *almost* of his own creation; feels himself suddenly seized by a disorder his philosophy at first teaches him to despise, but which at length fastens on his constitution so strongly as to baffle all his precepts, and all the efficacy of medical advice. Living in his works, in hope, and in the admiration of mankind, he — dies!

THE Academic, amid the groves of Science, the retreats of Literature, and walks of the Muses, moving the superior figure of each scene, becomes all at once overwhelmed with languor, lassitude, and debility, from the dews and damps that surround him acting on some inward pre-indisposition: his muscles grow flaccid, his joints yield under the pressure of a load unfelt before, his pen moves tremulous in his hand, while
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the vigour of his fancy, and the powers of his imagination, still continue to lift him above himself. Wondering what can so forcibly act on the remote channels, while the spring-head, the brain, feels itself undecreasingly supplied and overflowing, his friend, his physician, is sent for. He finds his patient's countenance altered; with all his exertions of sentimental pride to keep it up, his look, once expanded and lit up by the splendour of genius, on the fade, and appearances all against his prescriptions. He however tries the efficacy of art, but tries in vain. His patient's constitution gives way by gentle declensions, till at length, with a sort of intellectual vivacity superior to dissolution, he — rather ceases to breathe than to be,

THE Legislator, after having passed, with equal assiduity and honour, through the introductory, diversified process of education, for the Senate, or the Cabinet, compleats, on this foundation, the superstructure, by an actual survey of the capital nations of the world, their living manners, character, customs,

toms, and police. Thus accomplished, the expectation of mankind, and the darling hope of his country, he just begins to accommodate his vast acquirements of knowledge and legislation to the practical line of business, the high concerns of national virtue, prosperity, and glory, when the latent disease of his constitution, which perhaps in the same proportion acquired strength, as he acquired wisdom and learning, becomes too mighty any longer to lie concealed, putting on the alarming form of irregular gout, apoplexy, palsy, cholic, or stone. The oracles of medical science are consulted; who, like other oracles, shroud themselves in guesses and ambiguity, retail out their mistaken assurances; but behold (their learned responses yet quivering on their lips) the lamented patient is carried off in the paroxysm of a few minutes; the object of every eye, of every wish, of every prayer! He who had ascended so many glorious steps above the level of humanity, struck off the list of life like the meanest of the wretched crowd that gathered round the foot of the ladder!

THE Man of Business, through the servility and drudgery of an apprenticeship, arrives at a stock of his own, and embarks on the common bottom of credit and traffic. After a variety of perplexities, hopes, disappointments, infinite application, and unremitting patience, he acquires a handsome competence for himself and perhaps a numerous family; but in the moment of retiring from hurry and fatigue, to enjoy the sweets of ease and independence, he is arrested by some threatening malady, the consequence of long intense application, and corroding anxiety of mind. He still beholds life with confident looks of attachment, depending on some popular physician, whose presence, alas! frustrates the expectations he had formed of him in his absence. He consults the hoary Son of Science with eager solicitude, he follows his prescriptions, and he—goes where his physician would not chuse to follow him!

THE Man of Pleasure, having seen a desirable revolution come about, his father fallen asleep with his ancestors, and he himself arrived at the central point of all his expectations,

tions, the possession of an ample fortune, and having nothing to restrain his propensity to voluptuousness and sensual gratification, except what he neither hears nor sees, his conscience; he extends his sphere of enjoyments in proportion to the extent of his rents, and considering a modern fine Gentleman as particularly marked to throw off the unfashionable restraints of moral decorum, he ranges gloriously thro' all the dædal paradise of the eye and appetite, does honour to the *apprehended* destination of his being, eats and drinks to perpetual ebriety and stagnation of desire, and riots in every species of lewd debauch. Nay, not satisfied with repetitions of such indulgences, he even wonders that his Maker should have fixed terminations to enjoyment by appointing an interregnum of the passions in satiety, and in sleep. His wonder increases as his appetites grow more importunate, tho' jaded. A universal decline of constitution succeeds, at once abates his wonder, and issues in some incurable disease, though he languishes for some time under the infirmities of artificial old age, being beyond his grand climacteric at thirty. To
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imbitter his last moments, and add the most poignant insult to despondence, his Doctor, perhaps he who had been his companion occasionally, his silent critic during a long run of intemperance, approaches his bed, makes a general enquiry into symptoms, feels his scarcely perceptible pulse, steals a look of his countenance, — no longer the brightened countenance of a man! — and gives him the strongest assurances of — dying easy, his constitution being broken down beyond any painful degree of struggle. Unhappy man! He never thought of dying till he was more than half dead with vice and debauch, depending on his constitution more than on his own care of it; on the eventual aid of physic, more than on the resources of moderation and self-denial. Recollection and repentance often come too late. With an effort to live, scarcely amounting to a groan, he expires!

THE Writer has taken occasion to throw a concise view of Human Life, as subsisting in its higher orders, into the foregoing picture. Neither the lights nor shades should seem to be heightened beyond the reality, though

though the drapery be somewhat novel. The Reader acquainted with the World, who has accustomed himself to reflect on the various characters, circumstances, and incidents, that pass in review before him on the great theatre of life, and who has a standard within himself, by which every object is tried and arranged; such a person, he flatters himself, will feel the force of what he has attempted to represent in an affecting manner. Books on physick are commonly so dry and insipid, that no one thinks of reading them but as school-books or dictionaries. Could physick, and an engaging manner of writing, meet in the same author, physick would soon become a matter of plain sense and interesting curiosity. But as it is now technically and mysteriously kept up a learned secret among those only who *make* by it, men in general are better acquainted with the constitutions and health of their hounds and their horses, than with their own. We give up our souls to priests, and our bodies to physicians, as if God had given us no property in either; or as if the one could not be saved, or the other preserved, in health without fees. We so implicitly

PLICITLY give up these highest of concerns to others, (though we will not give up the most trifling argument or opinion) that we may be said to belong to others, and not to ourselves.

HE who would have his mind impressed with an undeceiving idea of truth, must have that principle within him awakened which is an appendage of his being, and is an attribute of humanity; not the offspring of fashion, the result of habit, or the concomitant of system. His bosom must expand, his heart be thrown into the thrillings of sensibility, while his head gives creation to the endless diversities of hypothetic reasoning; else he will exhibit the resemblance of a compass without its needle to ascertain the cardinal points, or those latitudes he may approach with safety and good fortune.

IT must be with a sensation of regret and pity that we see the most excellent persons, the most shining characters, our dearest friends, relations, companions, guardians, and instructors,

tors, cut off in the midst of their days, having scarcely lived half their time amongst us! Considering how extremely small the number of such valuable people are, in comparison with the motley aggregate of mankind, to be deprived of them would seem an irreparable loss: to be deprived of them suddenly and unexpectedly, aggravates and complicates the distress. Under the dominion of passions and reflections crowding on us from occurrences of this nature, we are sometimes apt undutifully to withdraw from Providence that veneration and respect it justly challenges from all; as if it were possible for Heaven to be ever deficient in integrity of design, wisdom of appointment, or uniformity of conduct. But the matter lies not with God, but with man.

OUR gracious Creator, as already noticed, designs every man to die of old age merely, not suddenly like the snail crushed under foot, or the oyster devoured by the mouth. The human frame is so admirably constructed, so exquisitely adjusted, that barring adven-

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titious obstructions, it will last till its own attrition either wears away the parts, or, otherwise, consolidates them so as to be unfit for the circulation and secretion of fluids. When a patient, therefore, is attacked at the moment, and notwithstanding he has been attended by the most noted of the Faculty, is hurried into the other world, it is justly presumable of ninety cases in a hundred, that the disorder has been mistaken and ignorantly treated. — Sudden deaths, in general, are *living* satires on physicians, if they have not expressly foretold them, and prepared relations for the event. Where there is no vital organ decayed or destroyed, proper internal or external evacuations, discreetly sustained, will always prevent sudden death. Of course, when deaths of this description happen, the physician in waiting has been either groping in the dark, or has raised his apothecary's bill at the expence of his patient. This is an awful consideration! Yet, notwithstanding, repeated instances of this sort are soon forgotten, especially in large cities, such as London, York, Bath, Bristol, while the routine of deaths

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and fees continue to go as regularly on as the shadows of a dial. Let a physician have once a name, a snug circle of friends (and particularly female ones, whose learning cannot dip deep into the merits of the cause) to defend and support him; and, like Saul, he may kill his thousands when he pleases. — It is impossible on this subject not to use the philosophical along with the medical pen. The philosopher and physician should form one character. When they do not, there is a chasm which nothing else can fill up. All professions are apt to degenerate into pedantic prudery and technical formality, if not relaxed, softened and expanded by true philosophy. Heat and light constitute the sun. Were he all heat without light, we should be groping spectacles of miserable darkness; and if all light without heat, no better than immoveable figures of torpid rareshow. Every philosopher may not be a physician, but every physician should be a philosopher. To have studied and adopted the systems of an Hippocrates, a Galen, a Sydenham, or a Boerhaave, may intitle a man to the emolu-

ments and badges of his profession, a big wig, cane, chariot, and fees, and qualify him to pass without stricture among the millions that seldom think; but they will never insure him rational success, if he follows them as blindly as our clergy do their creeds, or bestow on him that least perishable of all gratuities, the consciousness of having acted upon principle, and the proper information of his own mind. Let me add to this, that bigoted attachment to system * is of fatal consequence not only in religion, but in physic, as it plausibly precludes personal exertion and enquiry, consequently, impedes the extension of knowledge.

* Two celebrated men have made themselves remarkable in this way, Dr. Cullen of Edinburgh (formerly my much respected master) and the late Dr. Macbride of Dublin. They have drawn out the catalogue of diseases to so minute and wire-attenuated a length, divided and sub-divided the class of disorders with such subtle precision, that they have left them distinguishable from one another in *name*, without any difference in *nature*. By which practitioners are drawn aside to prescribe for a *technical term*, instead of a real characteristic disease. There is a simplicity and plainness in the diagnostics of diseases which have not yet been hit upon. Perhaps all the diseases of the human body may be comprehended within a *score*.

If you ask a member of a national church what persuasion he is of, what are his tenets; he will answer, I believe as the Church believes. And what doth the Church believe? All that is contained in the thirty-nine articles, the three creeds, and the book of canons. Strange! Then it is not *your* religion, but that of a set of men who thought for you before you were born, in the days of Henry and Edward, kings of England. In like manner ask a graduate in phyfic what is his medical creed, his formulary of practice? His answer will be: Mine, Sir, is that of the College. And whence had the College its sources of knowledge and experience? From the venerable Fathers of Phyfic high up in antiquity. Then you allow that all our eminent professors of the healing art have undertaken and do undertake the important business of saving the lives of mankind on the stock and materials of others? Yes; and what more safe, consistent method can ingenuity guided by discretion devise, than the aggregate experience of ages, the researches of grave, wise, learned, acute, liberal men? None, I allow you, but *that*

originating from a man's *own* gravity, wisdom, learning, acuteness, and liberality. The human understanding well initiated into preliminary science, and afterwards proceeding on personal experience, supercedes all the *ipse dixits* and precedents of the schools. And till a practitioner knows from observation the effect of a particular medicine, from proofs occurring under his own eye, and that medicine be unassociated in trial with others, and so onward through all the articles of the *Materia Medica*, if by the administration of it he cures, the merit wholly belongs to another; and if he fails to cure, the demerit is all his own by adoption.

I AM sorry to make the remark, but instead of this specific knowledge of diseases, we arrange them in our pocket-books by name, and prescribe for them accordingly. There is a fashion in physic as well as the cut of our cloaths, or the trim of our hats. How many medicines have been ushered into the world in the most pompous, confident manner, as specifics for certain bodily complaints,

plaints, and, when tried, have proved as inefficacious as the most despicable news-paper nostrums!--In this disgraceful catalogue what liberal minded physician will not be sensibly hurt to find the *Uvæ Ursi*, *Aq. Picia*, *Extract. Cicutæ*, *Rad. Colum. Ol. Ricin.* &c? — Like a lady's cap or feather, they were once in vogue, but are now obsolete and antiquated. Physicians adopted them in place of others which had their day and their run, and on finding them as impotent as their predecessors, have consigned them to neglect and oblivion. What shall in time to come be employed as substitutes, alike celebrated and infallible, will perhaps depend on the next fashionable importation of head-dress from France. Till then the art of prescribing must make a solemn pause, and draw its breath from the death of patients.

WE have got so many *never-failing* remedies for all disorders, published in newspapers under patent royal, and sold in every chymist's, apothecary's, milliner's, bookseller's and grocer's shop, that I am surprised

immortality has not before now taken place of God's first sentence pronounced on Adam. Medicines (with papal infallibility their label) for the eyes, for the nose, for the mouth, throat, stomach, bowels, blood-vessels, nerves, glands, muscles, ligaments, joints, &c. &c. have so elaborately multiplied, that the curious philosopher is left to speculate *ad infinitum*, why from the two opposite extremities, from the head to the foot, any disease or infirmity should ever lay deadly hold of our species. — But life and health are objects too precious to be treated lightly or ludicrously.

THE Dispensatory consists of above *eighteen hundred* articles restorative of health, and preventative of disease; yet I will take upon me to say, that not FIFTY of these are worth any thing, but to enrich the apothecary and disappoint the physician; I do not mean in his fees, but in the recovery of his patients. Is it not a melancholy consideration that the vast extensive trade of drugs is carried on to the manifest discomfort and prejudice of mankind;

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kind; and that physicians at the head of the profession, *supposed* to be liberally bred, not only connive at but encourage this heterogeneous trade! If the natural powers of the constitution, after being properly upheld, or relieved by some simple evacuants of what oppresses them, cannot resist the attack of a disease, is it to be supposed that a number of vile nauseating medicines, that disturb the stomach, and consequently the whole frame; nay, throw it into perpetual efforts to get rid of them, into loathing, kicking and retching, can effect either the one or the other? The supposition cannot be swallowed but by those who merit to be punished by being made to swallow the abominable potions they prescribe. There is a degree of sympathy and humane feeling for patients (supposing situations exchangeable) which should influence every physician; otherwise he must sacrifice heart to his head, and to his fees of profession what gold cannot purchase, the generous reflection of having given ease and comfort to his patient. I do not include here the interruptions which drugs give to the recovery of

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of patients : were these enumerated, there would be an account to settle, which, I apprehend, nine physicians out of ten would be unable conscientiously to settle.

THE superintendence of a man's life is a matter of serious moment. A physician should undertake it with awe and diffidence. Super-added to the indispensable advantages of academical learning, and the concurrent testimony of his abilities by the professors of the University, who have signed his degree, he should be eminent for several qualifications peculiar to him as a man ; viz. sagacity, quick discernment, coolness of temper, sedateness of judgment, great presence of mind, compassion, sympathy, tenderness, but above all a noble superiority to the love of money. When covetousness is the ruling passion, all the above qualifications are in a great measure rendered useless. The physician who is actuated by it, will undertake cases with the confidence of curing them, which are really beyond the powers of his art ; by which false hopes and expectations are raised, and

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no sooner raised than, to the inexpressible affliction of those concerned, cruelly frustrated; or he will never refuse a patient, whatever the number he may have already on his hands, but have so many at one time, that he shall not be able to attend or do justice to, perhaps, the one half. Let him have the intuitive knowledge of an Hippocrates, the investigating talents of a Sydenham, and the erudition of a Mead, still he must be unjust and unsuccessful in his art, if he accumulates patients without end, and undertakes disorders which are impracticable.

Quisquis ingentes oculo retorto
 ———— spectat acervos?

In either case the dignity of the profession is lowered, and its usefulness rendered too apparent to the ridicule and satire of the world. In the present cursory manner physicians attend patients, a number of things cannot but be daily omitted, which are strictly connected not only with the eventual recovery of the patient, but with his accommodation and comfort under suffering. A popular physician, from his multiplicity of calls (for he declines none) cannot stay more than five or
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minutes at the bed of his patient. Can this period possibly comprise all the questions a *good* physician ought to ask, in order to know accurately what he is about, and how it fares with the poor sufferer committed to his care? No. It may intitle him to his fee in the *regular* course of business, but it cannot make him a master of the disease he superintends; and if not master of it to the utmost extent of faithful enquiry, he trifles with the life of a fellow creature, and sets at nought the retrospective report of his own mind. As a natural consequence of this superficial performance of their duty, how often do we find physicians discovering unbecoming symptoms of astonishment and confusion, at sudden dangerous changes of disorders, which plainly point out they had been all along ignorant of them, and put their skill and sagacity on a level with what the apothecary or nurse may assume. I ask the former's pardon. In many cases I have known him, during the progress of a disorder, entertain an opinion of its nature and probable event very different from that of the physician, and, I am sorry to add,

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has had the catastrophe in favour of his opinion. Had the physician made it an article of conscience, or had his other numerous avocations allowed him, to have attended minutely to the gradation of the symptoms, such a disgrace would not have befallen him. A knowledge of a disorder, not by giving it a name, but by estimating its progressive force and tendency, and the timely prognostication of the event (which cannot be attained without the most minute and patient enquiries from time to time) are the basis of a physician's reputation. The first gives a firmness and dignity to his attendance, and the last sets him almost *divinely* above the level of human powers. But the merit that raises him to his high rank of character he can never acquire, without lengthened visits to his patients, and adapting a style of affable condescension to the attendants of each sick bed, who have it in their power to give him much useful information, would he but abate of his stiffness and reserve. In short, a physician who would have his treasures in heaven increase with his treasures on earth, that

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is, would preserve the honest possession of his mind, at the same time that he is endeavouring to preserve the life of his patient, should restrict the number of those he attends to a few, especially in acute cases, otherwise he ought seriously to revolve the command, “Thou shalt not kill.”

THIS only regards physicians in large cities, who may happen to have the popular run in their favour, and are by the folly of mankind subject to a glut of patients. In small towns and villages, this never happens. Those who have the care of pupils for the most part limit their number, in order to perform perfectly what they undertake. Shall this just rule take place, when only articles of ornamental learning are at stake, and shall it be universally disregarded by physicians, when the lives of valuable individuals are in their hands? From the above equitable restriction no evil can arise. Should physicians in large cities refuse patients on account of their having as many already under care as they can do justice to, others, perhaps equally qualified,

fied, though not hurried round in such a vortex of business, will be found. This matter, a matter of public importance, is considerably enlarged in another work. It was only introduced here to render it no way surprising that diseases are not more successfully treated now than they were some centuries back, in particular, the gout, the subject of the following pages. The writer happened for many years to be settled in a place where he could never have a superfluity of patients at once. This gave him a command of time in attending to each patient, and an opportunity of leisurely considering every case, not so much by school maxims, as by his own understanding liberally exerted. He had the satisfaction of being rewarded for his pains. He adopted methods of treating disorders not upon medical record, yet attended with happy success. There is not room to mention but two cases in illustration, which shall be as briefly recited as possible.

CASE I. Mr. Mickledowny, merchant in Bellycastle, Ireland, had been labouring under

der a low nervous fever for ten days before I was sent for. On examination I found most of the usual symptoms of this fever, but no tendency whatever to a crisis. When roused he spoke consistently, but his skin and his tongue were remarkably dry and parched, yet without great thirst. His pulse was far from being quick, but it was oppressed and labouring greatly; his respiration was uncommonly deep and loaded; his eyes dull and heavy; his urine deep coloured, but not separating or depositing. He was almost natural in the discharges of his bowels, and did not complain of pain or uneasiness any where. He had been blistered, but without effect. His legs where the flies had been on resembled flesh newly burned by a hot iron. Upon the whole, I saw evidently he had a good constitution, and that the goodness of it naturally, had not been attended to by his being kept all along extremely low, on barley-water, toast and water, two-milk whey, &c. I got him some strong wine whey immediately, and left directions that it should be repeated, with claret and water occasionally,

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for his constant drink. I could only stay an hour with him, having sixteen miles to ride back that evening. I ordered no medicines. The consequence was, that, next day, he was considerably better in all respects, and on the second his blisters set a running powerfully, without any new application. In short, every succeeding day left him less and less of fever, till he was perfectly recovered.

BUT the remarkable circumstance of all remains untold. The people about Mr. Mickledowny, when they observed the extraordinary change for the better in his case, from the prescribed use of wine, took it into their heads to outdo the doctor, and, instead of wine diluted, gave him tea-cups of wine by itself, which, instead of increasing his fever or disturbing his head, supplied him with rapid accessions of strength and spirits, set all the secretions a-going, before in a state of suspension, and brought on a keen desire for food. This instance of aberration from rule being attended with unlooked-for success, determined me to treat all fevers of the same

type in the same way. Many future opportunities presented themselves, in all of which the most quick and happy recoveries took place, but in none so observably as in the second case I promised to lay before the reader; an instance of a gentleman above sixty, but who always had a sound, robust constitution.

MR. JOHN CANE, attorney, late of Bavagh, in the county of Antrim, Ireland, on his way from Dublin to Derry, where he was engaged to manage the business of an election for the county, was seized with the true *febris lenta nervosa*, at a public inn in the town of Garvagh. From the first attack, his understanding (always before remarkably clear and correct) was affected. He talked incoherently and wildly of the business awaiting him at the election, and was frequently obliged to be restrained by force from putting on his cloaths, and setting out on his journey. Being a strong man, it was a difficult matter for his servant, even with additional help, to confine him to his bed or room. He continued

nued for more than a week in the hands of a country apothecary, who could not be supposed capable of forming a true judgment of his case, and from whom he would scarce submit to take any medicines. The reason of better advice not being solicited was this. He was only attended by a man servant, who would not take upon him to send for a physician. However, the people of the house where he lodged, with the concurrence of some gentlemen in the neighbourhood, made it a point to have Mr. Allison, a surgeon of experience in Coleraine, sent for. He accordingly came, apprised them of the danger of the patient's situation, and advised by all means that I should be immediately called in from the same town. Next day I came, and found appearances very unfavourable indeed. The powers of his constitution, from the continuance of the fever, without being checked, and his being kept exceedingly low, (a frequent but fatal mistake in this disorder) seemed to be quite unable to make any exertion, and likely to sink under the consequences too obviously to be apprehended.—

There was no time to be lost. I ordered blisters immediately to his legs, and one between his shoulders; but previous to their application, had him raised up in bed, and gave him a full cup of claret and water, two parts of the first, and one of the last. As he was extremely costive, I left directions for a clyster of warm water, salt, and oil, (a favourite clyster of mine) to be administered that night. Next day I had it not in my power to return, but specified in what manner he should be treated, especially with regard to the free exhibition of wine. On the third day from seeing him first, I came again from Coleraine, found him but little assisted, in general, by the plan I had laid down, notwithstanding every part of it had been punctually observed. From a particular circumstance the village and country round became foolishly impressed with the notion Mr. Cane had a malignant fever similar to the plague. The circumstance that gave rise to it was, this gentleman's eldest son dying a little before of a putrid fever, in Dublin, where it had fatally attacked many other persons. They concluded,

concluded, he had brought the infection down with him, and that it would spread through all ranks of people. This belief became so general, that it was with much importunity a nurse could be found to attend him, and not till I had positively declared his disorder was not of a catching nature. — In this assemblage of disagreeable circumstances, I resolved steadily to adhere to my plan, and even farther than I yet had gone, to deviate from medical aphorisms. As his blisters did not rise happily, I had the *unguent. epispast.* applied to them, and directed, that he should get a large cup of pure claret every fourth hour, additional to his constant drink of wine whey, or wine and water. He always took it greedily, but refused with much loathing every kind of medicine. Indeed I was little solicitous about any, as all he seemed to require was external stimulus, and internal generous support. In this last respect, all the cordials of the apothecary's shop are not comparable to sound wine. His case was so tedious and refractory, that it was the one and twentieth day from the first attack, and the

eleventh from my first seeing him, before I could with confidence speak of his recovery. Then indeed a kindly softness appeared on his skin, his blisters began to discharge a thick purulent stuff; his urine deposited a heavy sediment; and his sleep was less and less subject to perturbation and starting. In eight days afterwards he was able to walk about his room, except from the pain of his blisters, which still continued to run. It is highly probable, had this gentleman been treated in the ordinary way, loaded with drugs (as disgusting in their nature, as uncertain in their virtues) and been kept on a low refrigerant regimen, but he would have slipped through the practitioner's hands, notwithstanding the excellence of his own constitution.

It may be subjoined to the foregoing cases, as a curious fact, that in the first case my patient, before he could be pronounced out of danger, drank by itself, or diluted, *thirteen bottles of port*; and in the last, *twenty-one bottles of claret*.

I am

I am as strongly persuaded as I can be of any thing, that the practice of keeping patients low in the foregoing species of fever, not to mention actual evacuations, is most injudicious and fatal. If the constitution is not supported generously, what can a physician do? It must meet him half way, at least; otherwise he will meet disappointments in practice oftener than the reverse. In particular, by not freely exhibiting wine, in all forms, as often as this fever occurs, (and it occurs more frequently than any other) he acts a similar part to that of the workman who, in order to repair a house, should throw down the scaffold which supports him.—The two cases now recited, in conjunction with two afterwards mentioned of the gout *unscientifically* treated, I flatter myself, will prevent the candid part of my brethren from accusing me of rashness, in stepping aside from long established modes of practice. I have nothing farther to add by way of introduction, but with all due deference to recommend, to physicians in general, a less at-

tention to the *number* of their patients, and a greater to the *nature* of their disorders. But above all, not to interrupt the operations of nature (which in many complaints almost amount to miracles) by hateful, disagreeable drugs, that really disguise the symptoms, and tend to mislead the final judgment of the event.

ONE word respecting the disposition of the following little Work. It simply consists of two Capters, not subdivided: the one comprehending what the writer had to say on the *nature*, and the other what occurred to him relative to the *cure*, of this common, but little known malady.

A
S U C C E S S F U L M E T H O D
O F T R E A T I N G
T H E G O U T.

C H A P. I.

Of the Nature of the GOUT.

NO complaint incident to our nature has been so much the subject of investigation, as the Gout. Volumes piled on volumes have been written on it, insomuch that a decent library might almost be composed of the treatises published on this disorder singly. Physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, divines, mechanics, &c. have at different times exerted their talents to ascertain the

the nature, symptoms, treatment, prophylactic, palliative, curative, &c. of this mysterious malady; yet, to the degradation of science, and the disappointment of medical practice, true it is that all these were as accurately known to Hippocrates and Galen, as to any modern writer, not excepting Sydenham himself, who, beyond all others of later times, has left us the most minute and ornamented description of it. There is something surprising in this. A complaint that is obvious to our senses every day; that for the most part attacks at a particular period of life, seldom under manhood, and seldomer beyond the grand climacteric; attacks constitutions of certain stamens, persons of specific description in eating and drinking, and which observes, so far as my experience has extended, no stationary time of year, is, notwithstanding, an arcanum in medicine, a phænomenon yet to be solved by the ingenious and inquisitive.

WE boldly prescribe for fevers of all denominations; every species of rheumatism,
jaundice,

jaundice, cholic, asthma, small-pox, measles, nephritic, spasmodic, hypochondriac, hysterical complaints, &c. &c. but we stand aloof, with dismay and apprehension, at the most distant thought of prescribing for the Gout, as if the unfortunate foot attacked were really haunted by a dæmon, which we must not let loose, by any sort of medicament or application, lest it should seize us by the throat, and strangle us for our temerity. Even to disorders we apprehend to exist in the constitution, though not obvious to any of our senses, we fearlessly exhibit the appropriate medicine, and, to the nicety of a mathematical point, anticipate its effects on the unseen disorder: but the Gout, which we behold with our eyes, in its seat, advance, progress, and decline, we will not on any condition prescribe for, except in the article of flannel, patience, and large shoes. If a pain in the breast, or a stitch in the side, calls on us for speedy relief, we never hesitate a moment to apply blisters or cupping-glasses; but if a pain (probably of a similar kind) should slip a little lower down, and

attack

attack the foot, we commit the poor sufferer's alleviation of pain, to investments of wool or flannel, and to that forlorn hope of all maladies, patience.

WHY the feet, occasionally the seat of a disorder which attacks almost every part of the body, should be denied that relief which certain external applications have given in every other part, is a circumstance not to be accounted for, but from the perverseness and obstinacy of habit and fashion; under the *snug* patronage of which physicians, I am sorry to say it, appear to feel as much at their ease as other men. It is from the alledged danger of a revulsion to some vital organ, the head, or stomach, that practitioners are so afraid to apply any thing external to the gout. But if the application be of a proper kind, it will have a direct tendency to fix it there, instead of repelling it to any part immediately necessary to life.

EVEN independent of outward applications, that constitution which is able to throw the gouty matter down to the foot, is able to
detain

detain it there likewise, until the purposes of the fit are answered, unless causes intervene, arising from injudicious management and regimen. For instance, if the body be costive, in consequence of which both the secretions of urine and bile are obstructed, the gout will be very apt to revert suddenly upwards, in consequence of hardened fœces irritating the intestines, or acrid stagnating bile the passages from the gut to the liver. But the physician is here in fault, not the gout. The first enquiry of judicious practice should be the state of the bowels, upon the accession of a regular fit. Should they have been obstructed for some days before, which in general is the case, clysters are at the moment necessary, and to be repeated every three or four hours, till the indurated contents shall be totally brought away: while the stomach, during the above operation, is to be kept warm, braced, and invigorated, by some well adapted aromatic bitter, moderately purgative. In this way, the gout has no solicitation upwards, but auspiciously keeps the spot it took possession of at first.

THE sudden, and oftentimes fatal, retropulsion of the gout, has nothing to do with its peculiar nature, nor does it distinguish it from several other disorders, which, on being dislodged or interrupted, bring on alarming symptoms, e. g. miliary, scorbutic, erysipelatous, variolous, morbillous eruptions; hæmorrhoids, catemenia, &c. There is one difference, however, and only one, that I know of, between the gout and other disorders, liable to retropulsion, which is the suddenness and rapidity with which it moves. But this difference is to be accounted for in a mechanical way. The disparity in size and expansion between the place from whence the gout comes, and that to which it is driven, (I mean the trunk of the body and the feet) is great; besides the tonic construction of the parts, the one being muscular and cavernous, uniform and unbroken in continuity; the other tendonous and without cavity, irregular and intersected by a number of bones and articulations. The anatomist will at once understand me here. The impulse of the gout is from a wide to a narrow part; from

from a soft to a comparatively hard ; from an even, continuous substance, to an uneven and divided. From the first, the tendency must be extremely slow and gradual, as the contents of a large space cannot be translated to a smaller, but by imperceptible degrees ; whereas from the last, whatever may be the intervening cause, the transition is quick and instantaneous, and by a sort of reverberatory force. Hence it happens, that dangerous retrocessions of the gout occur in the beginning of the complaint, when a small portion of peccant matter has been deposited, of course, is easily dislodged and precipitated to its old quarters, or perhaps to a place of much greater danger.

WHEREVER the greater quantity of gouty matter continues to remain, there is the greater power of attraction, and thither the more sudden translation is likely to tend. When the gout has remained for some time in the feet, a sudden dislodgment is not, I believe, on medical record. From the anatomical construction of the foot, a resistance
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of considerable force counteracts the deposition of the gouty matter there. Considering this naturally repellant conformation of the parts, and the practicability of only a small quantity of the arthritic effluvia or matter being deposited in a short time, it is nothing wonderful the gout should be so easily displaced in the beginning of the attack, and so readily thrown back on the organs nature meant to relieve. But in the advanced stages of the fit, when a larger proportion of the gouty humour is deposited than what remains behind in the constitution, we never hear of any sudden translation to alarm the physician, or to endanger the patient. The first attention, therefore, of a sensible physician should be, by every rational precaution, to prevent the recurrence of the gout, before it has made its quarters good in the foot, (which, notwithstanding the Hibernianism, I would call its *head-quarters*) afterwards, his ingenuity and skill, to obviate such an accident, will not be put to any trial.

FROM what has been briefly laid before
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the reader, it would seem plain, that the gout differs not in its properties, liableness to sudden transition, cure, and prevention, from common phlegmons, erysipelatous tumours, chilblains, whitloes, rheumatic swellings, &c. *These* happening to lodge in the surface, in the fleshy parts, and interstices of the muscles, and *that* deeper seated among the tendons, filaments, and membranous investments of the bones and articulations, make a distinction, but not a difference. The tone and firmness of a particular constitution carry into the remoter parts of the system those acrid redundancies, and afterwards get rid of them in the form of the gout, which, in constitutions less firm and tonic, put on the nature of phlegmons, tumours, eruptions, &c. What sets this matter beyond doubt is, what every physician of experience well knows, that the gout, *repeatedly interrupted* in its course, and prevented from settling, either by design, or obstinate mismanagement, is again brought from the smaller circulation into the greater; alters its tendency; throws out rashes and efflorescences of various kinds on the

skin; settles in a large phlegmon or tumour; assumes the nature of periodical bleeding hæmorrhoids; forms the disease in the throat, called the angina; or passes off from the bowels in a diarrhœa of some days continuance, if not imprudently checked. It is well for the patient, and an happy specimen of his constitution, that the gout changes appearances with these disorders; otherwise, on being repelled, it would probably, after sculking insidiously in the constitution for some time, suddenly shew itself in the alarming attacks of apoplexy or palsy.

It is remarkable, in direct confirmation of what has been alledged, that the gout never appears where any other constitutional disorder attacks by periods. Persons habitually lax in their bowels, who have one stated evacuation for every meal they make, (one of the happiest temperaments in the world) never have the gout, nor indeed any articular complaint. The same may be said of those who have periodical discharges from the piles; who are subject to fevers; to scrophulous, leprous

leprous, cancerous, scorbutic diseases, whether in form of scabs, tumours, ulcers, or eruptions. I have attended to this matter with minute observation, as well as enquiries, and never have known an instance to the contrary. To those constitutionally exempted from the gout, may likewise be added asthmatic people, who throw off by expectoration large quantities of gross viscid matter; people whose cellular membranes are greatly distended with fat; and people who are subject to excessive perspiration. Even those who labour under contracted maladies, the venereal and psoral, for instance, are seldom or never attacked by the gout.

THE medical world, as well as the world at large, have been unaccountably led to consider the gout as being no less singular in its nature, than impracticable in its cure; as being a sort of original disease, like original sin, entailed upon the species; yet the foregoing class of disorders, which are substitutes for it, as well as it for them, all, or most of them at least, give way to medicament and skilful regimen.

A sort of two-fold question occurs here to be answered. What is the cause of the gout, or is it hereditary? The first part of the question might be answered by asking, what is the cause of *any* disease? But as this will probably not amount to that degree of information most readers may require, I shall answer it directly.

It is the misfortune as well as punishment of our species, when their fortunes can support it, to get into that artificial line of living, which either anticipates natural appetites, or extinguishes them by excess of gratification. I shall confine myself at present to eating and drinking, chiefly the former. The horse we ride, the ox that draws in our team, nay, even the very ass, our prototype of every thing in human nature that is dull, stupid, and senseless, knows when he has ate and drank enough ; never does either without desire, and then lays him down to rest : but the lordly rider (or animal) strutting erect in the majesty of man, eats, nay, gormandizes without being hungry ; drinks, nay, ingurgitates
without

without thirst, and lays himself down without being fatigued or sleepy. What are the consequences? A surcharge of food that does not nourish; a deluge of liquors that has neither the effect of exhilarating or enervating; and a recumbency of posture that neither invites sleep, nor renovates the animal system. The general deduction is obvious. From food taken into the system without the spontaneous desire of food, indigestions and crudities must be thrown into the circulation; from drink glutted over in large quantities, independent of thirst, the constitution is dropfically overflowed; and with the attitude and reclusion of sleep, without sleep, the animal spirits are agitated, dissipated, and unrecruited.

WHEN people restrict themselves in eating to the natural calls of appetite, and stop *within* rather than *beyond* these calls, and, at the same time, carefully advert to the state of their bowels (an attention of the last consequence) they very nearly may be said to have a moral certainty in their favour, against the

attack of any disorder, and, in the course of things, have the prospect of dying only of old age, the death our kind Creator intended all men to die of. I suppose these people born with sound constitutions, and with proper conformation of body. Such innumerable instances, as we see, of human mortality in infancy, childhood, youth, and puberty, are owing to parents, nurses, and, I must be allowed to add, doctors. Young people marry and have children, without the smallest knowledge of their own constitutions or those of their offspring. How then can the management of the latter proceed on any wise or prudent plan? Instead thereof, every thing is glutted over childrens' throats promiscuously, even to loathing and disgust; while the unavoidable consequences are as little attended to by the parent, at the full age of manhood or womanhood, as by the child, who has nothing but its senses to direct it. Hence it is that the measles and small-pox make such dreadful havock in the infantile and juvenile periods, to the sweeping off more than half of our species, every
three

three or four years. I will not even mention inoculation as a practice counteracting this acknowledged mortality, as wherever it is instituted, it spreads abroad the infection, or rather creates it, which, in the course of years, might have been unfelt in that place. Even if children escape these terrible disorders, with deformed skins and disfigured countenances, owing not to the parent's discreet superintendence of their diet and exercise, but something resistingly good in their constitutions, they afterwards fall into those variety of lingering complaints, and pallid cachexies, attending on worms living and breeding in the intestinal canal, which not only deprave the juices and impede the future growth of the body, but are every day mistaken and improperly treated by pretenders to our art, as arising from other causes: whence an early foundation is laid for obstructions in the primary organs, dropfies, jaundice, hooping-coughs, scrophula's, atrophies, declines, besides numberless hysterical and hypochondriacal complaints.

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SHOULD this series of disorders not take place, we often find children suddenly taken off by miliary or scarlet fevers, suffocations, convulsions, if not at this early stage of life attacked with real rheumatism or gout, instances of which I have known, and have had under my care, which, with much plausibility would give one the idea of the gout being hereditary. But it may be asserted here, that if the gout is derived from parents, so are all other disorders, as we scarcely can mention one incident to adults, which men of observation have not some time or other seen attack infancy and youth. My opinion, therefore, is here freely given, that the gout *is not hereditary*; nor are any disorders so but those that taint and corrupt the whole mass of humours, and do not attack by fits or paroxysms; such particularly as the king's-evil and venereal disease, which, undoubtedly, are communicated by infection from parents to children; and thus, strictly speaking, are diseases of *descent*. The gout only lays hold of the purest and soundest constitutions, persons whose viscera and glandular systems are

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uncommonly free of morbid obstructions; consequently whose evacuations and secretions, from the grossest bile to the finest attenuated lymph, go on regularly and perfectly, unless under the increased irritability and torture of a fit. How is it then that the gout can be communicated? Children, I believe, are not begotten in the immobility, and a-mid the excruciating pains of this furious disorder. And even admitting the affirmative, all the infection and refuse of the constitution are settled in the feet, during a perfect paroxysm, while every other part is as pure and sound as those of a new-born infant.

THE only thing that can be properly advanced in favour of the gout being hereditary is, a parent subject to the gout imparting those robust stamina, that elastic firmness of fibre, that muscular tightness and tone, which have the power of throwing the effects of our excess in eating and drinking, to the lower extremities, instead of stopping by the way, and seizing some of the nobler organs subservient to life. But in truth, this argument

ment may be put in fewer words, by saying that man is born of man. When parents of softer or more relaxed frames communicate constitutions of the same kind to their children, which disposes them to disorders short of the gout, that is, disorders attacking the trunk of the body, as well may we say, that the asthma, the peripneumony, the angina, the hydrops cerebri or pectoris, the hepatitis, the diarrhœa, &c. &c. are hereditary. But what alike applies to all, cannot be predicated of one alone.

For other good proofs, should others be deemed necessary, against the doctrine of hereditary right in the gout, (as my limits will not permit me to mention them here) the reader may consult the ingenious and elegant Dissertation on the gout by Dr. Cadogan.

I do not know how it is, but we affect every thing that is hereditary. Hence the tenacious hold of hereditary guilt from Adam, among the orthodox. Hence our dignified estimation of hereditary blood, imbued with
which

which every action is honourable, selling our country, after having first sold our conscience; debauching other men's wives and daughters, and defrauding tradesmen of their bills.—Hence our foibles, defects, oddities, whims, prejudices, and prepossessions, are held to be a sacred part of our sacred selves, approaching very near to beauties and perfections, because they belonged in kind to our fathers or mothers, perhaps, to progenitors higher up, till we arrive at the first parent of all, who, we are told, “got a son in
 “his own image.” We look upon them as a sort of *antiques*, therefore, industriously keep them in high preservation. And to mention no more, what has been the result of persevering personal endeavours, the deliberate achievement of half our lives, *the gout*, we strangely consider as being derived to us from hereditary tenure, and a part of our fathers' or grandfathers' last will and testament. These are always held inviolable, and, to be sure, if we break a part, we break the whole. Nay, to shew our extreme veneration for what is derived in right of lineage, we do
 every

every thing in our power, by sloth and intemperance, to augment the arthritic part of the hereditary legacy, in order to leave it thus augmented, with our other goods and chattles, to our beloved children.

WHILE the body continues to grow, the bones, muscles, and vessels, to expand and enlarge, we rarely meet with instances of either gout or rheumatism attacking it; the great dispendium of juices necessary to the accretion of parts, requires chylication and sanguification to go on as fast and as copiously as the stomach can receive food and prepare materials; so that no redundancies (consequently obstructions) can happen in the remote recesses of the system. Some years after adultness, however, when there is a resistance made to the farther enlargement of the body, matters alter materially. At this time, if the same quantity of food continue to be taken into the stomach, and the same supplies of chyle and blood take place, there must soon be an accumulation of juices beyond the demands of the animal œconomy, which, by
stag-

stagnating, will acquire acrimony, and then be thrown on the surface of the joints, or obstruct some large viscus. If the constitution be of the best kind, gout or rheumatism will carry off from the general circulation the redundant humours in a greater space of time; if only good in the second degree, variety of eruptions and efflorescences will relieve the habit; and if in the third, some of the abdominal viscera will probably be the seat of attack. Many indeed, fortunate in a peculiar temperament, throw off the offending cause in the first instance, by the bowels, which, of all efforts to unload the system, especially in young subjects, is the best and safest. Irritability in the first passages, and the consequent immediate rejection of whatever might have incommoded and injured the constitution, if retained there, is one of the surest preservatives of health and securities of old age. It is a daily monitor, whose admonitions if we despise, we must suffer daily: whereas those slow, gradual brewings of disorders, (if the term be allowed) that imperceptible aggregation of foul crude humours

mours in the remoter parts of the body, by the stomach and intestines not taking the alarm first, never once rouse us to guard against improprieties in living; and even when the attack comes in some formidable chronic ailment, we only significantly regret our being subject to them by right of inheritance, exculpate ourselves, and go on convivially in our dainties and luxuries.—Happy is that conscience, that moral delicacy, which recoils from the smallest guilt, for it never can be hurt by greater! and happy, thrice happy that stomach, those bowels, which instantly take offence at whatever might disturb or suspend health, if taken into the circulation!

WHATEVER has the effect of oppressing and irritating the *primæ viæ*, and soliciting them to sudden premature discharges, would, we may with indisputable analogy conclude, be in part, or in whole, the occasion of some chronic disorder sooner or later, if admitted into the interior habit. I have heard numbers of people express great satisfaction that
nothing

nothing disagrees with their stomachs, and that they can make free with all varieties and preparations of food, ragouts, favouries, fricacies, pastries, fruits, and sweetmeats, without feeling any load or uneasiness: but for my part, I think they are little to be congratulated on that account. A disordered stomach, that often relieves itself, or consigns the task to the passages below it in a salutary lax of a day or two, is much preferable, if we will eat to excess, or of too rich things, to the lingering, patience-racking torments of gout, rheumatism, or stone. If a foe is to attack me, let him do it at once, and not premeditate malice against me,—not cruelly invent a variety of concealed methods to hurt and destroy me.

THE distinctions between the Gout and the Rheumatism are merely arbitrary, or hypothetical. It is ridiculous to give disorders different names, and to institute different methods of cure, because they occupy different joints. A disease, consisting of pain, tension, and inflammation, gets into the foot,
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and is immediately christened the Gout; but, by imprudent treatment, it prematurely shifts its quarters, attacks the knee, head of the thigh bone, the elbow, shoulders, &c. and then it has the appellation of the Rheumatism. By what right? None that I know of, except such a one, in compliment to which we might call a common phlegmon, or boil, by a variety of names, according to the places or muscles it should happen to attack. A boil on the arm is the same as a boil on the leg, and requires the same treatment. Arthritis (the technical term for Gout) is derived from the Greek word ἄρθρον, articulus: so that, in right of etymology, and indeed of common sense, every articulation or joint of the body, attacked with pain, tension, and inflammation, exhibits the true Gout, equally as when the membranes and ligaments of the feet are attacked. These characteristics of the disease are not peculiar to any joint, but seize all indiscriminately; so that, when they settle in the numerous articulations of the foot, the disorder may be strictly denominated *the Rheumatism of the foot*, instead of
its

its usual name, the Gout. In this, as well as in many other particulars, we are seduced from the nature of *things*, to the consideration of *names*.

RHEUMATISM comes from the Greek word ῥέω, fluo, consequently, may well apply to every disorder that shifts place and removes from one joint to another, *i. e.* when it leaves the trunk of the body, or upper extremities, and takes possession of the tarsal and metatarsal bones of the foot, it may be said, ῥέω, fluo, or to move from the one to the other. Agreeable, therefore, to the derivation and meaning of both words, *Artbritis* and *Rheumatismus*, and the nature of symptoms and general treatment, they may interchange names with each other, and be promiscuously used in books of medicine; *e. g.* with propriety we may say, the Rheumatism of the foot, and the Gout of the elbow or shoulder.

THE school definition of the Gout is “ do-
 “ lor circa articulos, tensivus, dilacerans, coar-
 “ tans, verne et autumnno maxime revertens,
 E “ leniter

“ leniter incipiens, sensim majis increfcens,
 “ non multum auctus ad tactum, colorem et
 “ magnitudinem partis vix mutans, ortus ab
 “ obftrictione in vasis minimis circa has par-
 “ tes, unde nervi, tendines, ligamenta, peri-
 “ oſtea corrigantur, et miſerrimè cruciantur,
 “ unde tumor, rubedo, tophi, aliaque ſymp-
 “ tomata concomitantia.” In what does this
 differ from the definition of the rheumatism?
 “ Eſt dolor atrociffimus dilacerans, et mini-
 “ mo motu ſummopere excitatus, vagus, ob-
 “ ſidens articulos, nunc hos, nunc illos, ſæpe
 “ fixiffimus in parte, cum tumore et rubedine
 “ loci, quem occupat, ſed ſine ſubſequentē
 “ ſupperatione, motu membri admodum in-
 “ creſcens, et cum febre continua incipiens,
 “ quæ poſtea lenitur et ex intervallis longis
 “ quandoque redit.” There is ſcarcely a
 point of contrariety in theſe deſcriptions, ex-
 cept the term *vagus*, in the latter, and not
 in the former. But to counterbalance this,
 we have juſt after *vagus*, “ ſæpe fixiffimus
 in parte,” two epithets, in the eventual courſe
 of ſymptoms, as applicable to the Gout as to
 the Rheumatism. Notwithſtanding all this,
 ſome

some will mention the chalky lapideous concretions, deposited by the Gout in the foot, as alone sufficient to characterize it from the Rheumatism. But it should be considered, that cretaceous indurations are often found obstructing the joints of the fingers, wrist, elbow, &c. nay, not unfrequently, are cut out of fleshy muscular parts. Of course, if these tophi and nodi are the distinguishing concomitants of the Gout, and are likewise frequently found lodged in the hands, wrist, elbow, &c. then are the hands, wrist, elbow, &c. the genuine seat of the Gout, as well as the feet.

IF these nodial, topical swellings are consequent of the Gout, surely, wherever they are found, the Gout must previously have attacked. Nor are such extraneous substances even peculiar to the Gout, or Rheumatism. We find them in the bladder, the ureters, the kidneys, the biliary ducts, the liver, sometimes in the lungs, in the brain itself, and various other parts of the body. Earthy, cretaceous, stoney matter, is taken into the

system with our common meat and drink, and may be thrown on any part, by an hundred intervening causes. That it should block up the joints, and afterwards totally indurate them, is owing to timidity or unskilfulness, (almost constantly exhibited) in the modern mode of treating the Gout.

IN the first stage of the attack, when the acrid humours settle in the foot, if they had any manner of external discharge made for them, which would seem an indication for common sagacity to adopt, we never should hear of any thing so unnatural and deformed in the human constitution, as joints turned into chalk or stone. Nay, after the first process has taken place, and previous to induration, the dregs or exuviae of the Gout might be drawn off by some safe channel, in the form of milky creamy fluids. But if both are neglected, with hesitation quite unscientific, or obstinate prejudice most inexcusable, is it any wonder that exsiccations, indurations, and consequent immobility, should take effect? Nature, ever kindly in her operations,

rations, drives down the offending cause as far from the seat of life as she can, viz. to the foot or some other extreme part. She can do no more, unless she burst the integuments, and at once give a passage to the pungent fiery humours. She has no powers equal to this. Therefore does the collection of subtle, burning, vellicating matter continue to shoot and dart with the vibratory impulses of lightning and electricity, while the sufferings of the patient are intolerable and undescribable.

THE next thing Nature is obliged to do, unassisted and unattended to, is to burn up the skin, and give vent, by desquamation, to the corrosive particles of the disease, lodging near the surface. Those deeply burrowing in the ligamental and tendonous envelopements of the joints, with consummate attention to her own indications, she wears down into the soft gentle appearance of milk or cream. The skin peels off in large scales and flakes, and the excrementitious nobs and knots begin to form; by which the patient becomes a

cripple, incapable of that delightful exercise, those salutary exertions of strength and agility, which, undoubtedly, are to be classed among the principal gratifications of life. Viewing the ravages and devastations of the Gout in the foot, after the conflict has subsided, and the acrimony of the disease has been conquered, it is not at all surprizing, judging by analogy, that, repelled in its fiery volatile state, and seizing some vital organ, it should almost in a moment extinguish life.

DR. HOME,* at the close of his Sections on the Gout and Rheumatism, puts some queries to the reader, which, I think, may be easily answered. Respecting the former, he takes occasion to ask four. First quest. “Quare curatu tam difficilis?” Ans. Because it is not attempted *topically* to be cured, as all topical complaints *ought*. As to the enormous mass of alteratives, or anti-arthritic medicines, taken inwardly, they are equally absurd in their exhibition, as allowedly unsuccessful in their effect. Drugs may

* In his Principia Medicinæ.

as well be given to prevent fevers, and all the other maladies we are subject to, as the Gout. The nostrums in the news-papers are equally a disgrace to science, and to *that authority* which gives them a patent right to be sold.

I HAVE heard it often observed, by persons who would be thought very shrewd in their discernment, that if any practitioner could *invent* a certain mode of curing the Gout, he would soon make a fortune. These deep remarks never reflect that, before people can be cured of the Gout, they must be cured of their *vices*. Intemperance, voluptuousness, and gluttony, by which both mind and body are unqualified for exercise, are the parents of the Gout, as well as of every other disorder. Prevent the one, and you prevent the other; in which case philosophy and religion would seem to take the lead of physic.

SECOND quest. “An ullum specificum ad-
 “ huc notum quod podagram radicitus extir-
 “ pare valet, vel an ulla spes restat tale inve-
 “ niendi?” Ans. No specific yet known has
 been

been, nor probably can be, adequate to such an effect, nor indeed, in rational hope, is there any probability of such a specific being found out. As mentioned in our answer to the first question, a specific for the Gout would be a general specific for the excesses and irregularities of voluptuous life.

THIRD quest. “An in perspiratione cuticulari, promovenda, tota res agitur?” Ans. In the common method of treating it, this is all that is done, by investments of wool and flannel: but these operate no farther than by gently relaxing and taking off the tension; consequently alleviating the pain. A power equal to discharge the deep-seated acrimonious, lacerating particles of the Gout, *must* be able to burst the skin, and keep a permanent sore open. Who would think of carrying off the contents of a large boil or erysipelatous tumour, by topical perspiration? Could Nature have thrown off the matter of the disease by cuticular perspiration, she never would have taken the round-about dangerous method of propelling it to the foot. In short,

short, had it been of a *perspirable nature*, it never would have waited to be collected in such a quantity as to form a fit of the *podagral Gout*.

IT would be using the reader ill, and would serve no other purpose than to multiply useless pages, to give the different opinions of authors on the Gout. They have gone a thousand miles off to investigate a disorder, that might easily have been known at home. That is, they have plunged into endless theories and hypothetical reasonings, to analyse and describe a disease which is in itself an object of common sense. They have run into the nature of chymical salts, acids, and alcalies, putrescent and acrescent; they have, with microscopic vision, explored the lacunæ of joints, sinews, tendons, ligaments, capsula's, membranes, glands, nerves, capillaries, lymphatics, anatomically and physiologically, to prove that the Gout is—a swelled, pained, inflamed foot; that if Nature has not an opening made for her to discharge the acrid, caustic matter she may have collected; in revenge, she

he will torment the patient for many months, and then clog up the tarsal and metatarsal articulations with chalk and stone, and render him an old man in the middle period of life, leaning on his crutches, or pushed along by his servant in his wheel-barrow.

THE predisposing causes of the Gout are, the predisposing causes of all disorders. Why then enumerate them as peculiar to the Gout? It is making a malady mysterious which is not mysterious.—*Nodum in scirpo quærimus*.—Passing by the catalogue of remote causes exhibited by writers, I shall take some little notice of Dr. Cadogan's Three Causes, as comprehending all the rest, viz. indolence, intemperance, vexation. To the two first, undoubtedly, (the last, I think, is problematical) all the diseases that afflict and shorten human life owe their origin, except those that are caught from miasmita or infection. From the King to the inferior order of citizens, one or other of them, or both, universally prevail; and therefore we see maladies of all descriptions uniformly fatal in every house up to the palace itself.

itself. They are effects as deducible from their causes, as any in the natural or mechanical world. Many look on them as visitations of the Almighty, the judgments of his providence, and the corrections of his hand. If a sore throat, or tooth-ache, a pain in the head, or in the big toe, attack us, we must look up to the Sovereign Lord of all worlds, as the disposer of them ! Whatever may be the remote, God is the immediate, cause. This may satisfy the devout orthodox man, whose religion is in words and phrases ; but how shall the anatomist, the physiologist, the nosologist, rest satisfied with what contradicts ocular inspection, and throws the imputation of error on experience ? He cannot. Man is an organized machine, within which all the laws of pneumatics and hydraulics have effectual play. Though the machine is an automaton, a self-moving figure, yet it is regulated in the same way as all other machines are. It is a system of tubes, pipes, vessels, or conduits, which must be kept permeable, in order to preserve the vigour and activity of the whole. If any inflection or angle of these

these channels be obstructed, or overflowed with fluids, their action is either destroyed, or their capacity preternaturally enlarged. In either case, the operations of the machine are impeded. By the infarction that is supposed to have taken place, the tube that was pervious becomes a solid cord or body; and by the unnatural distention, the contractile powers of the fibre are lost; by which fluids escape unattenuated, that ought to have been acted upon, and get into cavities or articulations not adapted to them; whence are all the maladies that harrafs our species.

THE motions that regulate the human machine are, according to authors, produced by various means. Some think by the mechanical powers; others by the elementary principle of fire; a third class, by fixt air; a fourth by nervous juice or animal spirits; a fifth, by vibratory concussion; a sixth, by the simple volition of the mind; and a seventh, by the original impulse or agency of the Deity. These are all terms of sound and parade, to imply one of the simplest facts in
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the world, that man lives and is in health in proportion as his vessels are pervious from their greatest to their smallest diameter, and the various secretions are open and regular. When obstructions happen either greater or less, from an influx of fluids more than can be broken down and attenuated into serum, lymph, insensible perspiration, and animal spirits, a consequent visciduity and acrimony take place, whence a real disease is formed, internal or external, local or general, in the fluids or solids. These have been baptized with an endless diversity of names, by which authors have shewn their ingenuity, rather than their judgment.

ALL chronic disorders, gouty, rheumatic, hysterical, hypochondriac, among which I would class slow nervous fevers, as they run through a long period before nature relieves herself by a crisis, have *one specific cause*, excess of fluids in the circulation, indigested in the first passages, unattenuated and unsubtilized in the finer series of vessels: in consequence of which they acquire that crudeness,

ness, viscosity, sharpness, or corrosiveness, which interrupts health, and constitutes pain in some part of the system or other. If the humours in this state are thrown on the hypochondriacal viscera, the complaint will be lowness of spirits, dejection, anxiety, melancholy, fretfulness, despondence, unhappiness, which sometimes rise to convulsive fits and frenzy: if on the serous vessels of the brain, the different modifications of nervous fevers, which if unskilfully managed, always turn out putrid; and, if on the joints and ligaments, all the varieties of Gout and Rheumatism.

It is remarkable, notwithstanding the different situations of these disorders, which comprehend more than the half of those incident to our species, are all conquerable in one way, by external stimulants, deobstruents, and evacuants. But instead of these, supported by a suitable regimen, we find apothecaries* and old women, using every kind of repellants

* The common education of an Apothecary, particularly in country towns, is an apprenticeship of four or five years to a Master, who

repellants and discutients; whereby more constitutions are shattered and destroyed, by unknown inward ailments, than all the classes of alterative medicines have ever palliated or relieved. Tumours and pains, by suddenly disappearing in a particular spot, are not remedied, but *forced* by it into the general mass, or perhaps thrown on a more dangerous part. How often have we seen scurvies of the face, by the use of drying, astringent washes,

who served such an apprenticeship himself, without Greek, and without Latin, except what he has learned by scraps and abbreviations on the file, which he beholds with a sort of idolatrous veneration. His *Alphabet* has taught him the application of medicine to diseases, as set down in Lewis's or the London Dispensatory, under the name of fevers, small-pox, measles, gout, gravel, &c. Thus instructed and accomplished, scarcely in seven years does a disorder happen in a town, but he has the first inspection and management of it. If he fails to cure, after ransacking all his learned file, he has a physician called in, not out of respect to his superior character, but to wash his hands of the patient's death, should he die. The physician in this way knows nothing of the original disorder, (perhaps the disorder of the constitution) but has to struggle with the anomalous one brought on by the Apothecary, which is no more the first, perhaps, than the disorder Job died of. Notwithstanding, however, my opinion of Apothecaries in general, from much knowledge, I am happy to be acquainted with several of considerable learning, medical skill, and *conscience*, perhaps beyond many physicians.

washes, totally removed, to the great exultation and joy of the fair, and lie concealed in the habit for two or three years; but afterwards return in the form, more terrible, of cough, stitches in the breast and side, hectic fever, incurable consumptions! &c. &c. By the hemorrhoids likewise, being dried up, in the hands of ignorance and rashness, how many have lost, by apoplexy or palsy, their most dear and valuable friends! Nay, the *curing* of a leprous or scorbutic spot in the arm, or ulcerous tettering of the leg, has often brought on a train of inward evils, that have baffled the art of medicine. These unhappy mistakes and miscarriages happen, and will always happen, from not knowing the animal œconomy, and the real nature of disorders, which, when mysterious and complicated, are rendered so by irrational and preposterous methods of cure.

So much, shortly, for the *nature* of the Gout: the *cure* succeeds of course.

C H A P. II.

Of the Cure of the GOUT.

I WOULD begin this Chapter with laying down *four positions*, which, I think, cannot be *easily* controverted, and would seem a proper exordium to our method of cure. Position first; That we come into this world bating mal-formation and casualties, with bodies as perfect in organization, and as free from constitutional disorders, as Adam's was. Position second; That all mankind should die natural deaths, or die of general decay and longevity only, did not causes of dissolution intervene, occasioned by intemperance and erroneous maxims of living. Position third; That had the most ingenious of mortals been

set to work in search of habits and expedients to shorten the period of life, and even to render that short period burthenfome and miserable, they could not have adopted any more fatally to their purpose, than those daily exemplified in the higher orders of society. Position fourth; That the duty of a physician, the general scope and object of his practice, should be rather negative than positive; in other words, that there is more true candour, sagacity, and judgment, discovered in knowing *when* to abstain from medicines, especially in acute diseases, than by exhibiting them in their most approved forms. I would beg the reader's attention to a few remarks on each of these positions, avoiding, as much as possible, the preciseness and pedantry of technical terms, and the introduction of numerous quotations from authors, which, beyond mere necessity, only serve to divide the reader's attention, and unprofitably to fill a volume.

POSITION I. There is nothing, perhaps, in the whole range of theory, which will
find

find greater difficulty in making its way to the belief of mankind, than this. Enemies from all quarters will oppose it, armed with the prejudices of education, and the artillery of established opinions. It militates, in particular, with two formidable professions, the theological, as well as medical hierarchy, doctors spiritual as well as doctors bodily. But it is more likely to be true on this account. A convocation of divines, or a college of physicians, incorporated by royal authority, to preserve theological or medical truth, proceed on a mistake of the first magnitude, viz. that truth is fixable to a point beyond which it may not pass; and that one generation has a right to think and judge for another. Truth can never rest upon error, or be kept in preservation by its contrary. Men, therefore, who can form themselves into societies, or be persuaded they *ought* to be formed, for the above purposes, must act under motives and inducements which cannot stand the test of impartial justice, and disinterested philosophy. In short, the principle they go upon is selfish and covetous; it

is, to monopolize the emoluments and honours connected with such collective chartered modes of preserving truth: that is, truth in their hands becomes a corporational means of making a livelihood, often great fortunes, and no farther than this primary consideration, is it to be extended, or set at liberty from aphorisms and syllogisms. A generous superiority to the low love of money should seem as importantly necessary to societies, to render them respectable, as to private characters.

I MAY conjecture what opposition I shall meet with from what has already been experienced by a predecessor in a somewhat similar walk of sentiment. Dr. Cadogan has given being to as many opponents as there are proofs of just reasoning, good sense, and liberality in his Dissertation on the Gout. *Quis unquam in sole ambulabit absque umbra?*—It would be in vain for me to expect a gentler fate from a class of men who make their persuasions subservient to their interests, and decry every thing *à l'aveu* that has an appearance of separating

separating these. You will never make a profelyte of him who enjoys honours or a rich benefice in the church, *not* to be made one, and who, perfectly at ease, has the means in his power of gratifying all his favourite passions. In like manner, by introducing novel opinions into the Art of Healing, by which its pecuniary chances may be lessened, and its professors be forced to move in less splendid lines of life, you can never make converts to these opinions; rather in consequence of the attempt, however generous on your side, you are certain to excite a general clamour and resentment. In this way (almost feloniously) you lay your hand on a man's purse, which, on all occasions, is the most susceptible part of him; his love of science, and sense of truth, are only to be affected through this shining medium. You may trespass on his understanding, you may throw out inuendoes bearing hard on his honour, make yourself as merry as you please with his conscience and his Creed; but go one step farther, detract from his professional popularity, take out the smallest pin belong-

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ing to the smallest spoke of his chariot-wheel of practice, by which his fees may suffer diminution, all the Christianity his Bible ever taught him will be insufficient to procure you his forgiveness. God may forgive you in another world ; *he* will not in this. Yet, in despite of such a character, which one meets with every where, I would maintain my first position, “ that we come into
 “ the world, bating mal-formation and ca-
 “ sualties, with bodies as perfect in organi-
 “ zation, and as free from constitutional dis-
 “ orders, as Adam’s was.”

BIRDS, beasts, fishes, trees, fruits, herbs, all things in the animal and vegetable creation, produce their kind perfect in every part, and durable for a certain time. In short, we find no such thing as hereditary diseases, hereditary taints, or hereditary blights. All things belonging to the inferior world, in every renovation or reproduction, are as complete, respecting form and structure, as when they respectively dropt from the Creator’s hand. It could not have been otherwise
 without

without all things changing their conditions and wearing out their nature, in a series of years; by which they would have become different from what the Creator had made them, and every succeeding transmutation been the cause of another and another, till the very idea of a first cause should be lost and forgotten in matter's eventual and spontaneous operations on itself.

WHAT had happened to all animals in this way would have involved man likewise, the animal paramount of this world. Had diseases been hereditary since Adam's time, such changes would have occurred in the human constitution, as to have made the present race of men as unlike beings of the same name two thousand years ago, as contraries can be. We cannot suppose Adam, coming immediately from the formation of the Almighty, had any positive disease in his constitution, for nothing *diseased* could possibly have *him* for its author. Whence then had any of his descendants hereditary diseases? The head-link of the chain is wanting, by
which

which it should hang ; of what use then is the chain ? A child can have no disorder from indigestion or crudity, because the first passages have never been filled with food : its first complaint, therefore, must be dated from the manner it was treated immediately after birth, and its subsequent attacks of illness to subsequent management. To ourselves every thing is imputable that infers bodily pain, want of health, or shortness of life.* As to
 God's

* Some Physicians seem delighted to fix the *guilt* of disorders on the Air. I would suppose that the other two elements, Water and Earth, will, in time, come in for their share of *imputation*. Intemperaments of the Atmosphere, and epidemics of the Season, are technic words of high import. Sydenham chiefly gave them origination, as well as currency ; and, in physic, Sydenham is the Apostle Paul. There is illiterature, or want of comprehension, in the hypothesis, which seems disgraceful to science. Disorders that begin within the constitution, in consequence of vicious modes of living, we would attribute to the breezes and zephyrs, which are really as innocent of them, as any *honest man*, now living, of Adam's eating the prohibited apple. In every climate, the circumambient air, and the bodies of the inhabitants, are suited to each other. To suppose it otherwise, would be the greatest absurdity in nature ; an absurdity equal to this, that the meat we eat, the fluids we drink for mere *sustenance*, the raiment we clothe in, may become *epidemic evils*, and cut short the life of man. Constitutions of the Air, (in *our latitude*) so predominant

God's interfering to punish men with this and the other malady, the supposition is the offspring of ignorance and superstition. That he *can* do it, I am far from denying, in the way of miracle; but otherwise he no more interrupts the movements of the animal machine, on which health depends, than he does those of a clock or a watch, on which the regulation of time depends. Before he can do it, he must first counteract the use of those very organs he himself has made, that is, defeat one of his own purposes, by the adoption of another. Man changes and alters every round of the dial in this way, but God never does. The inference I would draw from the whole is this, that as there is
nothing

as to bring on inevitable maladies, are, I think, the figments of medical conceit. A river might as well communicate diseases, as the column of Air that surrounds us. If we receive injury from it, it must be owing to our not *inwardly* fortifying ourselves against it, so that the cause proceeds from ourselves. It is remarkable, that those who are most in the open air, receive least prejudice from it. Dr. Sims, (my quondam worthy college-friend) in his Observations on the Epidemic Diseases of the counties of Armagh, Tyrone, &c. seems to have run out too far in this mistaken track. I practised many years in the neighbouring counties, without seeing occasion for any such remarks.

nothing mysterious in the nature of disorders, but all deducible from obvious second causes, so likewise I would assert, that there is nothing mysterious in the cause; both resting on simple principles, and less connected with abstruse academical learning, than with natural good sense, unperturbed by slavish habits, but, above all, undebauched by the sordid lust of money.

THE second position is, in a great measure, a part of the first, or a corollary from it. That all mankind should die natural deaths, or die of general decay or longevity only, would seem as much a matter of fact, as that a child will be a youth, and a youth a man. The progressions after the period of adulthood to extreme old age, are no less certain, than those before it. Nay, the one is a security for the other. Why does a child become a youth? because no occasional cause intervenes suddenly to cut the thread of life. From a similar cause not taking effect, nonage arrives at age. And why does not manhood advance forward to old age, and old age imperceptibly

perceptibly bend downwards and fall asleep in the grave? Because, in the earlier stages of life, we laid in, by living the reverse of temperance and moderation, sure materials for apoplexy or palsy, which does in a moment what Providence would have done by gentle and scarcely perceived gradations. An hundred of a generation dying merely from the oil of life being spent to the last drop, instead of being prematurely spilled, or mixt with adventitious fluids, that prevent it from burning fairly out, dying of wrinkies and grey hairs, (if I may use the term) amounts to a respectable proof, that thousands would have died *in the same way*, if their constitutions had had the same fair play. One in a thousand dying the death of nature, ascertains the *possibility* of such a death; a greater number would prove the *probability*, and a greater number still the *certainty*. But the smallest justly infers the greatest proportion.

OUR third position is a melancholy matter of fact, resulting from an actual survey of life. Every thing that is unnatural, every
 thing

thing that is forced, of course unkindly to the constitution, we do daily. We feed on the productions of other climates, instead of our own, on which alone our constitutions ought to be formed. We indulge in ices, acids, and all sorts of cooling sweet-meats, in winter; and in summer, riot on fish, venison, and every rich loaded wine, sauce, and gravy. We eat without being hungry, and drink without being thirsty, at the command of a particular hour, or a particular party. We wake when we should sleep, and lie a-bed when we should be up and exercising. We overstrain the nervous system, by exerting passions and discovering emotions which are artificial, and are the effect of fashion and affectation, rather than feeling or nature. We give the most minute and solicitous attention to every article of dress, elegant set-off, and personal exhibition, at the expence of half our time, and half our fortune; but we advert no more to our constitutions, our state of health, than to those of the coachman who drives us, or the sedan-man who carries us. We take into the system, to shew our politeness to *her*
at

at the head, or *him* at the foot of the table, one half more than Nature is able to convert into nourishment and good blood; and, (strange is the tale) we are as heedless of what should proportionably leave the system, as if we were stuffing a pin-cushion with wool, or a golf-ball with feathers. When incipient diseases attack us, we conceal them, or slur them over to our friends as a slight head-ache, a cold, or a *jaded-out-ness* with pleasure, which a comfortable night's rest will effectually remedy. When things put on rather a more formidable appearance, when the head-ache, cold, &c. &c. seem to increase, than with an avidity with which we never said our prayers, we ransack the news-papers for drops, powders, tinctures, balsams, cordials, restoratives, sweeteners, cephalics, bracers, strengtheners, and a long etcetera of *cures*; and when we have *vainly* tried them, with a degree of steadiness we never shewed our best friends, we procure some *celebrated* physician, to get us speedily off his hands, by sending us full of hope and convalescence to Bath, Bristol, Tunbridge, Cheltenham, &c. where, with
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the *divine waters* gurgling down our throats, (*aqua quietis si non vitæ*) we sink into the arms of everlasting rest, with the philosophical consolation that we have not only lived a *fashionable life*, but we have died a *fashionable death* also. *In pace sempiterna requiescant!*—Can human ingenuity, aided by every supposable malignant power, invent any thing more direfully effectual to mutilate human existence, maim every active instrument of health; and lastly, to draw down the curtain of death on the misery of man, than the above picture of what every one knows to be true?

As for the last position, “that a physician’s duty is rather *negative* than *positive*,” it seems so self-evident, that little need be said to confirm or illustrate it. Notwithstanding, as there would appear a sort of quaintness in the expression, and as many readers may not perceive the justice of it at once, I shall think it well worth my while, in as few words as possible, to make it plain and obvious. A sensible physician, before he ever thinks of prescribing to assist Nature, ought
to

to know for certain what Nature points at, and what are the real characteristics of the malady she labours under. For example's sake, we shall call it a *fever*. But what species of fever is it? Doth it require to be repressed, or to be sustained? These are two leading questions in the nature of fevers. Notwithstanding the technical variety of fevers we have particularized in our systems of diseases, I will venture to say, that all fevers ~~vers~~, may be reduced to *two* classes, the high and low; that is, fevers which require to be supported by generous treatment, and fevers that demand evacuations, and every antiphlogistic mode of lowering. Inflammatory, hectic, putrid fevers, even the length of the plague, belong to the former; and all low, backward, tedious, remittent, aguish fevers, to the latter. You must put the one forward, and the other you must restrain by every method in your power. Should you reverse the treatment, administer warm spicy cordials to the first, and to the last, barley-water, toast and water, chicken-water, balm-tea, hyssop-tea, &c. you will effectually cure your patient
by

by—killing him. Yet such mistakes happen every day (especially the latter) in the hands of some fashionable physicians, who think no more of patients' dying suddenly and unexpectedly under their care, than of glasses of Bath waters emptied at the Pump-Room. There is none to call them to account, they have their fees, and friends never regret their companions and relations dying in a genteel water-drinking place.

THE very name of a fever shocks and terrifies most people. With the idea of fever, we associate that of intense heat, intense thirst, rapid circulation, &c. That the world at large should so judge, is nothing wonderful; but that physicians should follow the credulous uninformed multitude, is truly surprising. More than the one half of the fevers incident to these islands, are defective in heat and circulation; yet they are all treated in one way by many practitioners of name; on weak diluent liquors, acids, saline draughts, &c. to the great prejudice of patients, even should they recover from such fevers. In such cases,

eases, as there is no perfect crisis, the dregs of the disorder, co-operating with reduced habits, lay a foundation for many lingering chronic complaints, which never leave us but with life. The physician's duty here, with respect to drugs, is merely *negative*. Good wine, and generous appropriate nourishment, are the whole *medicines* to be prescribed, with external stimulus, and preserving the freedom of the bowels, which is best done by judicious forms of *cathartic bitters*.

I WOULD not have taken up the consideration of fevers either here or elsewhere, had I not been more than once a deeply-affected witness of fatal consequences attending modes of treatment the reverse of what is here recommended. Beside, it falls in with the scope of my fourth position, that a physician's merit and usefulness consist more in knowing when to refrain from, than to administer, drugs. If the constitution has justice done it, and if the doctor actually does no harm, the patient has a good chance of recovery.

OF what use then is the presence of a physician in a sick man's bed-chamber, it may be asked? Of singular use. To prevent his patient getting any thing prejudicial to him from the officious circle around; to have all the natural outlets of the constitution kept constantly open; to regulate every day's regimen according to exigencies, and so as to keep up the strength, and preserve the stomach from being offended; to treat his patient with renewals of fresh air, the most delightful of all cordials; to allow him as many changes of posture as he chuses, (supposing his head not affected) another highly gratifying relief in most disorders; but especially to give his arms free play from the common barbarous imprisonment of bed-clothes: and, lastly, by every friendly, conciliating, soothing mode of address, to engage the patient's affection and confidence, with which hope is always allied, and all the placid, gentle passions.

BUT to resume more particularly the curative treatment of the Gout, the immediate subject of this chapter, and indeed the consummation

summation of our plan. This disorder generally attacks in two ways ; either with violent symptomatic fever and its concomitants, which, barring accidents, soon terminate in the foot, not exceeding thirty hours in their progress ; or with a train of moderate symptoms, such as a decrease of appetite for a day or two, a sense of weariness, irresolution, slight fits of dejection, and disinclination to company, nausea of stomach, and sudden loathings of food, temporary returns of rigour, and a sort of creeping chillness, beginning about the heart, and descending down the limbs ; afterwards erratic obtuse pains, touching at the shoulders, wrists, loins, knees ; till at length, these subsiding, a permanent but gentle fit comes on. The pulse is nothing agitated at all in the latter progress of the disorder, nor even in the former so much as one might imagine from the severity of the symptoms. The urine in both is commonly pale, wheyish, and limpid, and the belly disposed to costiveness. This is the ordinary progression of the Gout, which confines patients a longer or a shorter time, according to the strength it

brings down with it to be subdued in the foot. After the termination of the fit, the limbs remain extremely weak and feeble, growing more and more so, in consequence of repeated recurrences of the disorder; till in progress of time, the patient loses the use of them altogether, and is obliged to lean on crutches, or be moved along in his wheel-chair. In other cases, hundreds of invalids are soon reduced to the miserable state of decrepitude, by chalkstones and other obstructing concretions.

WE suppose here the Gout to come and go regularly for a series of years, in which case it is invariably attended with paralytic weakness, or articular immobility. But let it be observed, that they are the very best of constitutions that hold out in this uniform way. Numbers, after having a few perfect fits of the Gout, from some error in conduct, or from the fatal effects of *preventative* medicines, discontinue to have them, though in the articles of meat and drink, they live pretty much in the same way as formerly. What is the event? They enjoy good health for two, four, or six years,

years, pleasing themselves with having got quit of so troublesome a visitor, and then are attacked with stone, gravel, dreadful cholics, jaundice, agues, dropfies, nervous fevers, bastard peripneumonies, asthmas, and all the *et-cætera* of human maladies.

FROM the premises, it cannot but occur, even to the slightest observer, that of all constitutions, the gouty is the most excellent, and, in the comparative view of greater and lesser evils, that the Gout is the most desirable of all disorders. Wherever it attacks, there is an immunity from other bodily indispositions, except for some little time previous and subsequent to the paroxysm: the vital organs are sound and unobstructed; the appetite good; the secretions regular; the inclination for sleep punctual to the hour, and that sleep refreshing; the spirits elate; the head quite clear; the imagination lively; and all nature beheld with complacency and satisfaction. What would man be at? The state of the Deity? Never to ail? Never to feel sick or sore? He must first change natures

with the Deity. While he retains his own, and carries so much rude mortality about with him, he must take his chance with all the sons and daughters of Adam, and have the Gout, or *something worse*. And, moreover, if any one expects radically to be cured of the Gout, without purchasing thereby a more dangerous substitute, the fulfilment of his expectations and the forfeiture of his life will, probably, come together.

BUT there are still *desiderata* with respect to the Gout, notwithstanding the preference we have given it to all other disorders. If it could be shortened or alleviated, that weakness of the limbs subsequent to the Gout, or those indurations of chalk that fill up the joints, be prevented, every mortal would have reason devoutly to wish for the Gout, as by far the least and safest of constitutional ailments. So far from being surprized, after having indulged his senses with the nicest gratifications for a number of years, lest no luxury unpurchased, no pleasure unenjoyed, within the reach of his fortune, that the Gout should

should attack him, he would look upon it as his best friend, like all *true* friends, severe on his vices and misconduct; as the purifier of his constitution, and the renovator of his health. These *desiderata*, I think, are within the reach of the physician, provided he is a man of simplicity in his prescriptions, a man of candour in his sentiments, and a man of disinterestedness in money matters. The method I would propose will, in a great measure, set aside the administration of drugs, be a test accordingly of his candour and liberality, and—will put him to the severest trial of all—will curtail his fees. If on these terms we meet, (and upon no other terms we can meet) I think the Gout will receive a blow, which, though often meditated, it has never yet received.

My method of shortening the fit, speedily relieving all the symptoms, preventing the weakness of the limbs, and the consolidation (as it may be called) of the joints, is nothing scientifically recondite, artfully involved, or mysteriously wrapt up; it is a simple outward application,

application, it is—BLISTERING. It will be said, this is no new application, it is no new invention; it is as old as the first attack of the Gout. I own it, and so is *common sense* as old as the creation; yet, how seldom do we meet with it! As seldom as christianity on the stage, or self-denial in the pulpit.—I can tell the reader more, that in most Treatises on the Gout, it is inserted in the catalogue of arthritic remedies. But wherefore? It is never tried. In the recital of the King of England's titles, he is called King of France, and with as much *real* application to him, as hitherto blisters have been to the Gout. I know a Dr. Smith* does something with his patients similar to *blistering*. He raises little bladders or pimples on the foot, by means of
some

* Any one who has read his Pamphlets, may see he is not a person of liberal education, or considerable stock of medical knowledge, for the bulk of his sentiments on the Gout is quotations from authors. Indeed it was not to be expected that a man bred a mechanic (as I am informed) could have had access to the fountain-head of science and information. Yet it is a matter of fact, that some of our best medicines have been invented by quacks, and some of our most *successful* practitioners have not been *regularly* bred.

some irritating liquor* he lays over it. Like all snug uninaugerated doctors, he attributes the merit of his cure (for he has performed several, I am informed, in desperate cases) to certain tinctures or elixirs he gives his patients. I do confess he deserves the benefits of his policy in this respect: a monopoly that conquers a disorder hitherto esteemed unconquerable, the *opprobrium medicorum et medicinae*, and restores a blessing that is the sweetener of all others, *health*, is a monopoly that almost carries off the detestation and odium of the term. Yet, begging the excuse of the Doctor, (whom I have not the fortune to know) I must take the liberty of telling him, that the happy success which has attended his deviations from established usage is not to be attributed to the contents of his bottles, (farther than they are invigorating and opening) but to his making artificial sores on the foot. By this sensible, though *un-medical* method, the torture of the Gout is divided and broken. The exquisite twitches patients feel, and can scarcely

* Probably the Ol. Vitriol. or the Tinct. Canthar. mix'd with some of the balsams, to disguise and give it a consistence.

scarcely endure, are from what I would call *artbritic reverberation*. The lightning of the Gout flashes downwards to the foot, there it meets with no conductor to carry it off, but recoiling, it darts back again along those nervous channels which brought it down; thence repelled, it again and again descends, while the excruciated patient is almost ready to give up the ghost, under the direful reiterations of the electrical shock! But at this forlorn dilemma, the sagacious observer of nature, the judicious excentric from system, steps in; and by suitable applications, almost becomes indictable for magic and incantation: the skin, at his command, elevates itself into little vesicles and pimply tubes, by which, as its proper conductor, the phlogiston of the disease effects a passage, and all the remaining symptoms become mild and tractable. The dreadful repercussions of the gouty spicula upwards and downwards, (if I may so express myself) no longer alarm and irritate the patient. All is sunshine and calm, after the volcano has burst and spent itself.

To quit metaphorical ground for that of plain language, the great and sudden relief experienced by gouty people, who have been so fortunate as to have the surface of their feet blistered and ulcerated, is from the resistance and tension being taken off. Fibres, membranes, and ligaments, stretched (as I would call it) on the rack, must be inexpressibly comforted, when the rack is removed.

It is remarkable, when Nature is oppressed with more than she can throw off, by the common conveyances out of the system, that she makes *sores* smaller or greater on the surface. Hence the small-pox, measles, erysipelas, miliary eruptions, scurvy, itch, common boils, scrophulous and canceromatous tumours, &c. &c. If these fail to recover the constitution, and restore the habit, she (infinitely provident as she is) has no other resource: life is irrecoverably on the decline, and death (sometimes the most blessed of all doctors) is at hand. The Gout alone she is unable to convert into a *sore*. It would seem of such a subtle and attenuated a nature, that
it

it keeps too far within the recesses of the system, to be thrown out in the gross matter of an eruption on the surface, or the still grosser matter of a phlegmon or ulcer. But as the constitution has not power equal to this, is it not indicated, by just analogy, that the physician should not only be the imitator, but the assistant of Nature, by doing what she is not competent to do, by raising an artificial sore on the skin, to discharge, in the most safe and expeditious method, what she would otherwise be obliged to strain through the kidneys, in the form of lateritious sediment, or elaborate and calcine into chalk and stone? The Gout, therefore, is the simplest disorder in the world. It is an attempt of the constitution to *make a sore*. With her kindest intentions and best endeavours, she cannot do it; art, therefore, steps humbly forward, and performs a task which the constitution solicits and encourages. The Gout, conformable to its corroding nature, preys on the part it settles in, if unassisted; the limbs are seized with paralytic imbecility, or the membranes and ligaments become impervious and indurated.

These

These are the last *necessitous* operations of Nature (and kindly they are, though hard) to preserve the generous flame of life in its socket, and pour new additions of oil into the half-exhausted lamp. Were her admonitions and hints attended to, with common discernment and discretion, she never would be reduced to so deplorable a necessity. In the state of inflammation and excessive tension, she would instruct the physician to carry *both* off by some sufficient opening hard by. If he has the happy docility to be made wise by a teacher, so sure in her indications, he will not embarrass her by repetitions of loathsome drugs, which can have no more effect, taken into the mass of fluids, to attenuate or discharge the arthritic matter in the foot, than the tickle of a feather along the eye-lids to cure a *gutta serena*. Nor even to the foot itself will any application, however emollient, relaxing, or anodyne,* have any effect other than a pernicious

* Dr. Warner, it is more than probable, fell a sacrifice to injudicious applications of this sort. He has, (tho' a Divine) written on the Gout more from experience agitated and misguided by torture,

nicious one, and full of danger, by taking off the pain, which is Nature's means of keeping the arthritic matter there, and sending it up again into the habit, from whence it seldom returns for that time, but fastens on some upper joint or internal organ, or effectually lurks unfelt till the next fit, which it aggravates and complicates; complicates, by being forced, from the *double* quantity, to throw the gouty humour into the hands, wrists and knees, as well as the feet; so that the unhappy patient has three topical diseases at once, the *chiragra*, the *gonagra*, and the *podagra*.

EVERY one's recollection, conversant in such matters, will supply him with many examples of gouty people being considerably
relieved

ture, than clear distinct knowledge of the disorder. His motive for publishing his book was humane and philanthropic; but it has done, and will do much mischief, by recommending remedies with all the energy of experimental suffering, which abate pain, without discharging the cause of it, and mitigate the symptoms by repelling them into the constitution. He died at the prime of life, by impatiently trying expedients to render the evils of life more tolerable. A proper lesson to others!

relieved by coming to Bath. Is it owing to the virtues of the Bath waters? No; they have none beyond those of sulphur, steel, and marine salt, (volatily combined with a fluid) official articles of the apothecary's shop, and of the kitchen, which all men know, and which no one should depend on as nostrums. The unexpected relief such people experience is by getting free of physicians and apothecaries, who, by keeping the stomach in a constant state of relaxation and nausea, with warm fops, and alterative, sedative, sudorific draughts, invite the Gout perpetually into it from all quarters, and disable it from settling any where else, especially in the foot. This is the primary cause of the sudden relief they feel, inasmuch, that at the end of the very first day's journey from medical imprisonment in London, they begin to grow better, have a lightness of sensation over them, an hilarity of spirits, and a returning degree of appetite, which surprizes them. The next day increases all those agreeable appearances, and so onwards, till they arrive at the *city of health*, which, thenceforwards, gets all the credit without

without having the merit of the cure. This appears so certain to me, that I am persuaded, instead of coming to Bath, had they prolonged their journey to Edinburgh, spent a week or two in that agreeable place, and then returned to London, as great an alteration for the better in their general state of health would have happened, as they fondly attributed to the waters of the Bath Pump-Room. I am ready to grant, that getting out of the jading circle of business, and the same dull series of objects, getting, as it were, a reprieve from the harassing perplexities of thought, and the corroding anxiety of worldly cares, not to mention the salubrious inhalations of pure, for smoaky fœtid air, and the sweet stillness of the shifted scene, in comparison with the noise and hurry of London pavements, have all a notable effect in every patient's restoration to health.*

THE

* I would not be thought to depreciate wantonly the virtues of the celebrated Bath Waters, which have almost exhausted the genius and eloquence of many writers to describe, and expatiate on them. I allow them virtues; yet I cannot be convinced but that the *concomitants* of Bath expeditions for health, manumission from
drugs,

THE Bath waters never do good but when they act *purgatively*: otherwise they heat and swell the patient, and render him uneasy. It is remarkable, that the usual preparatives to drinking the Bath waters are medicines which act as evacuants of the intestines and of the kidneys. When these primary channels of the constitution are unobstructed, the Bath waters pass off freely and easily; but should they happen to be in a contrary state, they remain in the stomach, distend and disturb it. All the merit then is in the preparation.—But I am far from intending to enter into an examination of these well-known mineral fountains of health; I only beg leave to declare my opinion, that the common appendages of these springs, *exercise, regularity, and freedom from care*, perform ninety-nine cures of an hundred recorded in the Bath registers. People of laxative habits find these waters rather

H

coincide

drugs; a change of objects; of ideas, of sensations; clear air; regulated diet; exercise; going to bed early, and getting up accordingly; great *Bathonian faith*; a resolution to please and to be pleased, (*the happy fashion of the place*) bear off Hygeia's palm, from percolated sulphur, salt, and steel.

coincide, than otherwise, with their constitutions: people costively disposed would experience manifest injury from drinking them, if not assisted by opening medicines: is not the deduction then obvious to common sense, that it is the constitution, or medicines acting in place of the constitution, which atchieve all the miraculous cures of Bath? It is a burlesque on the understanding, to consider any waters as *medicinal*, which require MEDICINE to give them efficacy. Bath, notwithstanding, as the grand centre of attraction for the rich, idle, lazy, indolent, pleasureable, hysterical, hypochondriac, enterprising, fortune-hunting, inquisitive, gambling, &c. &c. will never be without its thousands, and its ten thousands. I talk as a philosopher and a physician, not as a master of the ceremonies, a member of the corporation, an undertaker of funerals, or a grave-digger. As the former particularly, I would take the liberty of asserting, that there are more sudden, silent, unremarked, unaccountable deaths in Bath, than in any place in the world, not visited by the plague; excepting, perhaps, Bristol, and
its

its environs, the Hot-Wells; for which crowds of unhappy persons leave their country, friends, and relations—to find a grave! and where doctors fatten on the consumptive remains of their species!

FOR instance, in the Gout, (the disorder in hand) I would ask, in the name of sense and common honesty, what effect can a scarcely ascertainable portion of sulphur, salt, and steel, in a glass of Bath water, have? Taken into the stomach, and mixt with the variety of juices it meets with in the descent, it is decomposed: the heavy ingredient, steel, passes downwards by its own weight, escaping the *lacteals* by gravity; and the volatile parts, taken into the circulating fluids, are too volatile to act, but pass off without acting by all the secretory organs. Beside, twenty times the quantity of either salt, steel, or sulphur, contained in a libation of Bath water, may be taken without any demonstrative effect in any disorder we are acquainted with.

IN most cases, gouty patients returning from Bath, cured as they call it, after a few months' entanglement with a sedentary life, business, fatigue of thought, dispendium of spirits, and perturbation of mind, find that the Bath waters only deceived and disappointed them; they, with their inseparable attendants, change of place, objects, and cares, only coaxed and petted the disorder for a time, but were impotent to conquer or discharge it. Hence we invariably find, that those persons (many of them peers and senators of the nation) who have been said to recover miraculously at Bath, have, in the progress of half a year, or a year, been as formidably attacked as ever, have repaired again and again to the *pool of Bethesda*, with the same hopes and the same disappointments; till, at length, Nature, worn out between the two, is no longer to be soothed and dandled, but yields to the inefficacy of mineral prescription, regrets that she ever lived so as to require them, and, in the moment of regret—becomes incapable of regretting.—On the whole, the merit of the Bath waters consists all in *negatives*. To
drink

drink them, you must leave the noise, hurry, and perplexity of business ; you must leave your crapulary debauch, your bottles, your w—— ; nay more, you must leave your affected, hypocritical self, for your best resemblance, the *childhood of Nature*, and then drink the waters of life at Bath !

A GOUTY man, or a jaundiced woman, after an high life of luxury, satiety, disgust, loathings, rest without sleep, and sleep without refreshment ; gratifications without desire, desire without ability,—comes down to Bath from the metropolis ; instead of eleven o'clock, the metropolitan hour, they rise at eight, (the etiquette of the place) and instead of whiling it away in their stove-rooms, I mean their chambers, with an attention to every crevice admittance of the air, as if it really admitted the plague, they commit their sacred bodies to a chairman, or else, at some wonderful moment of resolution, venture to walk on their very legs, without a carpet to entice them, and to look at Heaven without the intervention of glasses. On this novel er-

rand of experiment they arrive at the Pump-Room, impatiently approach the bar, beg their glafs of *more* than nectar and ambrosia, and swallow it with a vivacity of faith, which, I am certain, never accompanied their rehearsal of a Creed; next, with a devout recollection of the cup, sit down for an hour, to let the magic work, the *Bethesdan* miracle take effect; then rise up, as if by sudden inspiration, and repeat the goblet of incantation. Instantly the chairman is called, and off carries his *medicated freight* to coffee, tea, toast, and butter. All the while, the water-enamoured patients never recollect, that for some weeks they have been living in a manner quite different from that which brought on their complaints; of course, that this *reversed manner*, not their potations of Bathonian *spring-water*, has wrought the change in their bodily health. No! their physician told them the contrary, which their own defect of self-observation confirmed. Restored to a degree of health unexpected, by means which they mistook; the Gout repelled for a season, and the *bile* discharged by the common preparative

tive of the waters—*purgative potions*,—they speak of Bath in a style of rapture ; talk of its waters—I had almost said—as if they were what Scripture calls *the Waters of Life* ; by drinking of which men should *live for ever*.—I mean not to burlesque *sacred things* ; I revere *them* too sincerely to have any thing of the kind imputable to me :—I revere them as a CHRISTIAN : but how absurd to think that a class of disorders, which people have been contracting *for years*, (such as the Gout) should be *charmed away* by a few glasses of *simple water*, impregnated with mineral effluvia !!!

WE are told, moreover, by medical commentators on experiments, that it is a something called *fixt air*, impregnating mineral waters, that gives them all their efficacy. Allow it to be so; how does it get into the system ? These waters, we know, seldom do good, but when they act on the first passages, by promoting extraordinary evacuations : if so, this salutiferous *fixt air* must be carried down with the common contents of the bow-
els,

els, passing too quickly, by the mouths of the lacteals, to be absorbed. On the contrary, if these waters have not this effect, they swell and incommode the stomach, deaden the appetite, and disappoint the fond expecting patient. In either case, this *fixt air* never gets into the circulation, to operate on the small vessels, and finer secretions; even should we suppose it not decomposed, and rendered evanescent, by being mixt and agitated with the gastric, as well as salival juices, which, I believe, cannot be proved not to be the case. We are so unaccountably prone to magnify the virtues of simples, mineral waters, nostrums, specifics, &c. that we have lost all attention to the plainest things in nature; viz. that by getting out of a situation which brought on a disorder, we begin that moment to get rid of it, unless there be such an accumulation of foul humours, either inward, or near the surface, as to require powerful evacuates; or unless the violence and duration of the symptoms should have increased, or consumed some viscus, on which life instantly depends. Which ever be the case, mineral
waters,

waters, alteratives ; medicines, whether absorbent, attenuant, demulcent, detergent, deobstruent, tonic, restorative, will all alike prove their own impotency, the interested confidence of physicians, and the credulity of patients. People, in general, little know how much it depends on themselves, to enjoy good health, or at least tolerable degrees of it. Many persons, voluntarily, and with their eyes open, *make* cases for lawyers, because they will not be at the trouble of *settling* them candidly among themselves : and thousands, with the same deliberation, *make* cases for physicians, because they will not be at the trouble to *use* means of health, every day in their power.

TREATING of the Gout, in its curative intentions, it was unavoidable to take some notice of mineral waters, principally those of Bath, which, by being drank (especially with purgatives) for a length of time, have indeed cured the Gout, or given *short* fits of it, but have as surely brought on every species of paralysis.

lysis. Why are disorders of this class so frequent now-a-days? Because gouty patients have been treated with acids,* and cooling saline medicines, or have depended *solely* on the efficacy of Bath waters for a cure. In either case, the gout will be converted into the palsy, in the course of a few years; while the soothed, seduced patient is buoyed up with the hope of a *perfect cure* having been performed. I never see the Gout recede suddenly, that was accustomed before to attack in regular fits, unless I have also *seen* it subdued, nay discharged, by modes of treatment tantamount to the topical nature of the disease, but I suspect—*anguis in herba*—a more fatal disorder taking root, that, not many years after, will quickly carry off the patient,

or

* The before-mentioned Dr. Smith, it seems, gratifies his patients with as much *acid juices* as they ever wish to call for; but then, let it be considered, that our wary doctor has, at the same time, opened a *sore* on the foot, which both stations, and discharges the Gout. During this wise progress, the stomach and bowels are free of Gout, so that acids (otherwise highly mischievous) can do no harm. The Doctor's giving all the merit of the cure to his *cooling juices*, and other medicines, is, perhaps, excusable. He may deem it an innocent piece of medical craft.

or else make him a debilitated, crippled spectacle for life.—Nature, when she makes her push to relieve the constitution, if she be intercepted or counteracted, in a particular spot of her own chusing, will generally make it towards the opposite quarter, or to the place it came from, as even here there is a sort of action and reaction. If it came to the foot from the stomach, and is dislodged from the former, it will attack the latter again with double severity, and with double difficulty will be removed. In such a case, if the happiest and most prudent methods are not used, the Gout, probably, will seize the head, and hurry off the sufferer in a fit of madness or apoplexy. So dangerous a thing is the disappearance of the Gout, without a cause fully adequate to the effect!

THE progress of prescription* in a train of symptoms, all arising from one simple cause,
the

* In the different stages of the Gout, Dr. Shaw recommends no less than *fifty-six* different compound recipes, as if he had been determined that the apothecary should go halves (to use a common phrase) with the disorder, in overpowering and subduing
the

the Gout, is really wonderful. For instance, an arthritic cough is often taken for an obstruction, and incipient inflammation of the lungs, whence a pulmonary tabes is to be dreaded.

the constitution. Even Dr. Ball, whose practice of physic was intended as an improvement on Shaw's, has a goodly number too, only sixteen *less* than his predecessor. Other writers of practical systems, who have done infinitely more harm than good, not excepting even those of Tissot and Buchan, viciously abound in the same excess of drugs.

Very few drugs are necessary in the Gout, and these should always be of the simplest kind, and least disgusting, unless we have a mind to prolong the pain, and endanger the patient's situation. The trade of the apothecaries is become so considerable and lucrative, by the systematic *fellow-feeling* between them and their more learned brethren, that the ease, accommodation, comfort, and safety of the poor patient, are only secondary considerations. More than one half of our Pharmacopœia's must be lopt off, like the rotten parts of a tree; our apothecaries reduced one half in number; otherwise Art will continue to triumph over Nature, and the Doctor over the Constitution. Every physician, who calls in a load of medicines to his aid, gives a certain proof that he knows not what he is about; for if the patient's constitution, when it has fair play, is not able to struggle with the disease, how is it possible drugs should restore that constitution? If it is oppressed with *moveable* acrid humours, a few simple well-chosen evacuants will effectually relieve; but if its powers, its stamina, are gone, all the contents of all the apothecaries' shops in England cannot renovate them. When the emunctories are kept open, according to the indications of the case, nothing farther is necessary,
but

dreaded. The lancet gives flow to eight or ten ounces of blood ; the patient is kept on barley-water ; drinks ptisans and pectoral decoctions, *ad libitum* ; swallows stated spoonfuls of gums, balsams, or oils, made into emulsions. He feels himself, however, rather growing worse, with the addition of weakness, oppression, and disordered appetite, unhappy days, and sleepless nights. These then are laid aside as ineffectual. Anodynes, along with expectorants, are next prescribed ; the storax pill, for instance. The cough is subdued, and sleep procured : but mark the consequences. The body becomes costive, the bile is detained ; indigestion, sickness, crudities, flatulence, cholic, spasms, intolerable shooting pains, succeed. What is to be done ? Why, opiates are to be discontinued, and cathartics to be administered, sufficiently strong

but to keep up the constitutional strength of the patient, by means appropriate to the nature of the symptoms ; give him free admissions of pure air, which is the medicine of Heaven, and keep him undisturbed by the noise and impertinence of the world. If this method fail, human skill is at a stand, learning and science have only to regret Adam's sentence, " Dust thou art, and unto dust " thou shalt return."

strong to force the intestinal passage, so long blocked up with narcotics. Solutions, therefore, of neutral salts, perhaps with the infusion or tincture of Sena, are next to be swallowed. They are. The patient feels swelled, uneasy, and stomach-sick, and continues so till a violent puking comes on. The puking alarms by its continuance. Acids saturated with Sal. Absinth. or the Rad. Columb. are forced down the patient's throat. In the mean time the limbs swell; total loss of appetite, languor, and extreme debility, ensue; the *facies Hyppocratica* begins to appear, hiccups, singultus, and convulsions; till, at length, life goes out in a heave, or a groan!—The fatal progression here is obvious. The first symptoms were mistaken; mistaken prescription succeeded of course; every new prescription made a new disorder, and every new disorder required a new prescription: till between disorders and prescriptions, prescriptions and disorders, the patient felt himself let into Paradise, by escaping from both!* Often also,

as

* Not for the gratification of the merely curious, but for the sober reflections of the man of feeling and philosophy, I shall hereto

as the last resource, the patient's constitution having weathered out the reiterated *attacks* of

hereto subjoin the case of an Edmund Turner, Esq; (a medical transaction which happened near ninety years ago) which was a violent pleurisy, but by physical treatment, was precipitated into a peripneumony, that put an end to the unfortunate patient's sufferings. He was attended by two physicians of reputation in their day, Dr. Fry, of Oxford, and the *famous* Dr. Colbatch, of London. Each accused the other of having *murdered* the patient, and, considering their formularies, it is hard to say which of them had the *merit* of consigning the poor sufferer to his everlasting rest. The former's prescriptions were as follow :

℞ Ol. sem. Lini (sine igne) extract. lib. semis.

Sig. The Oil.

℞ Syr. Balsam. Tolat. unc. quatuor.

Sig. The Balsamic Syrup.

℞ Antimonii Diaphoret.

Coralli Rub. pp.

Margar. pp. ana drachm. duas.

M. f. pul. in Chart. 12 equal. repenend.

Sig. The Pearl Powders.

℞ Aq. Hyssopi.

—— Cichorei. ana unc. sex.

Limacum Mag.

Lumbricor. Mag. ana unc. unam sem.

Cinnamon. Hord. unc. unam.

Syr. Capillor. Ven.

—— Violar. ana Drachm. sex.

M f. Julap.

Sig. The Julep.

℞ Emp. de Cicut. cum Ammon. unc. duas.

℞ Sem. Cumin. pul. unc. semis.

Dr. Fry.

of pills, boluses, powders, tinctures, lozenges, electuaries, emulsions, decoctions, infusions, &c. he is sent to Bath or Bristol waters, to have a miracle performed on him: but as miracles have long since ceased, he is at length convinced, he might have staid and died at home among his friends, instead of travelling two or three hundred miles off for—a doctor and a grave.

ALL

The patient (the sensible practitioner may well suppose) grew worse, in consequence of taking these compositions; upon which Dr. Fry is dismissed, and Dr. Colbatch sent for. He comes; *condemns* every thing that had been administered by his predecessor; and institutes the following modes of cure, which terminated (as such a farrago of preposterous drugs generally does)—in the dismissal of the happy patient to that world where apothecaries are unknown. Copious blood-letting, *at first*, and afterwards a large topical vesicatory, would have superceded these disagreeing prescriptions, and, it is probable, have saved the life of the patient.

℞ Oxymel. Simp. unc. quatuor.

Aq. Lactis unc. sex.

—— Cinnamoni fort. drachm. sex.

M. f. Mistura. Cap. Cochlear. unum frequentur.

℞ Crem. Tart. unc. sem.

Tart. Vitriolat. drachm. unam.

Sach. alb. unc. sem.

M. f. pul. in sex. Chart. distribuend. ex quibus cap. unam tertiâ quâque horâ in cochlear. fyr. aceti. Superbibendo haust. Apozematis sequentis.

℞ Fol.

ALL internal chronic complaints, that begin without any assignable cause, and are not attended with quickness of pulse, with feverish heat and thirst, by whatever name they may

℞ Fol. Hederæ terrestr.,
 Flor. Hypericon. ana M unum
 Rad. Althææ unc. duas.
 Balsam. Tolutani drachm. unam
 Aq. Fontani. lib. tres
 Bulliantur ad tertiæ partis consumpt. et coletur,
 Colaturæ adde.
 Oxymel. sim. unc. duas.
 Sp. Nitri dul. gut. xxx. M.
 ℞ Sem. Pfillii.
 — Cydoniorum ana unc. fem.
 Ponantur in Chart. separatim.

I would not insinuate that the foregoing medicines absolutely destroyed Mr. Turner; but this much I will take upon me to say, that by insignificantly engrossing *time* and *opportunity*, they excluded a more rational, and, it is probable, a more successful mode of treatment, which is *almost* tantamount.

If registers had been kept of all those who have died of what I would call an *Apothecary-death*, *i. e.* of taking drugs, I might say with a certain well-known historian, “that the world itself could not have contained the books that should have been written.” In all disorders, to keep the stomach unoffended and undisturbed, is one of the first requisites of practice. But how shall a physician do this, while he is perpetually pouring into it disgusting nauseating potions or boluses! Even the stomach of a man in perfect health

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would

may be called, whether hypochondriacal, hysterical, epileptical, gravelly, bilious, &c. are THE GOUT, lurking in the fleshy vascular parts,

would almost turn its inside out at the appearance or smell of these miserable succedaniums of health. How is it then that we allow ourselves to believe that a stomach, rendered doubly irritable and squeamish by disease, can possibly receive them? If the learned Doctor who prescribes them, with all the assistance of sanity and robustness, were obliged to swallow the one-fourth part of what he authorizes the apothecary to send the patient, not one prescription of a dozen would be a—*memento mori* on the latter's file.

The stomach is the *primum mobile* of the system, the main-spring of the machine. By throwing it into tumult or convulsion, you assist the disturbance and irregularities of the disorder, instead of quieting and harmonizing them; retard, instead of expediting the happy crisis. I can readily form an apology for our *under* brethren the apothecaries, who are only drug-merchants, and cannot refuse a customer: but what will be sufficient to bring off physicians with reputation, who, in order to alleviate the condition of a *sick man*, by their loathsome medicines, render him *more sick*? I would not be understood to mean here any prescription that is intended to unload the stomach or intestines of their acrid contents, but medicines that are to act in an *occult* capacity, as sedatives, correctors, sweeteners, coolers, alteratives, assimilators, concoctors, &c. These, when the sanguineous circulation is violently agitated, the secretions and evacuations all intercepted, must either lie a dead load in the *primæ viæ*, or these *primæ viæ* must be stimulated to ill-timed, ineffectual efforts to get rid of them.—But a note is not the place to enlarge farther on such *abuses* of science.—The subject shall be considered at another time.

parts, instead of attacking, with pain, some articulation or joint. They all require the same method of treatment : external stimulant applications, and opening medicines of the warm and invigorating kind,* with generous diet.

* In such cold, backward, tedious disorders, nothing is more common, than to take, when purgatives are requisite, those of a cooling, weakening kind, such as Glauber's salts, Epsom salts, Rochelle salts, soluble tart. James's powder, &c. &c. than which nothing can be more injudicious or inexpedient. The common method of working them off is equally so ; drinking large quantities of weak green tea, saltless water-gruel, chicken-water, &c. Whereas the first should be spiritous, aromatic, and comforting ; and the last small drinks of warm brandy and water, gruel seasoned with sugar, nutmeg, and brandy. By this method, all is carried powerfully downwards, no languors or faintness succeed the evacuation, and none of the natural secretions are suspended thro' weakness.

The case of a noble Lord is an example in point. I happened by accident to call at his house in the country, and found him in a most deplorable condition. He was pale and emaciated. His pulse beat more than 90 in a minute ; a symptomatic fever had exhausted him for some weeks before. His strength, his spirits, his appetite for food, and inclination to sleep at night, had forsaken him. He had excruciating pain in his right thigh, which, to the touch, felt hard and corded, apparently with humour prevented from moving downward. His Lordship could not stir off his chair, but was obliged to be carried by servants from one room to another. At the time I first saw him, he was sitting with his limb held over a large vessel of warm water, impregnated with herbs, while an attendant stired it. During the operation (as may well be imagined) he was usually seized

diet. In consequence of persevering in some such method for a month or two, I have known many instances of the joints or external parts being suddenly seized with pain, or
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with languor, faintness, and sickness. On enquiry, I found his Lordship had been all along kept on a low regimen, and was then taking saline refrigerent draughts, and purgative neutral salts. The disorder, before it was disguised and rendered anomalous by improper management, seemed to have been a *critical erysipelas*, pushing downwards to settle in his leg. This complaint, uninterrupted by the officious interference of art, and suffered to ripen for some time in the place it attacks, has saved many lives. It is like the Gout, as has been more than once observed: if repelled, alarming symptoms always ensue. His Lordship, however, submitted to my advice. I ordered a large blister to be opened on his leg, and recommended a more generous diet. The hectic appearances in his case were the effect of *atonia* and debility. He had resolution to persevere some weeks in my method. Success rewarded his Lordship's perseverance. The repelled humours were once more solicited downwards; his pains above diminished in proportion; his strength, spirits, and appetite, gradually returned; and he soon got abroad, to the surprize and pleasure of all who knew him.—Since that time (about two years ago) his Lordship has had a return of pain and swelling in his leg. He had not fortitude to blister a second time, to discharge the acrid humour, but applied to some physician near him, who (I think very injudiciously) put him under a *mercurial course*. It has relieved the topical complaint, (as it always will) by dividing and scattering the humour through the general habit. But the disadvantage of such practice is this: If the constitution is not able to push down to the extremities another critical accumulation of the same kind, the consequence is too likely to be, from a depravation
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throwing out critical eruptions and efflorescences, to the unspeakable relief of the patient. Nor have I the smallest doubt of success in every case, provided the period of life be not too far advanced. For in these, as in all disorders whatsoever, if the constitution does not co-operate with the physician, the skill and judgment of the latter can avail nothing. And I am likewise fully convinced, that in twenty instances of patients recovering happily, the constitution

and dissolution of the juices, a tendency to a lueophlegmatia, pulmonary decline, atrophy, jaundice, or dropsy. These consequences, I sincerely hope, will not happen to his Lordship, my friend, and my relation.——In general I would observe, that it would be happy for many people, at critical periods of life, could they be persuaded to put up with a pained or swelled leg, rather than run almost a certain chance of inward maladies, complicated and lingering. How much preferable is a fore tettering leg, to obstructed bowels, a rotten liver, or ulcerated lungs, not to mention a number of nameless internal grievances, which render all the enjoyments of life tasteless or insulting? Some people are foolish enough to say, “why should we break our skin? the worms will do it soon enough: let us die in a whole skin, and with a whole conscience.” These, however, are no ways connected. To die with a whole conscience is, doubtless, a matter of infinite moment: but to leave this world in a whole skin, while the interior parts are in a state of abscess and putrefaction, would seem little worth the wish or care of man, whose characteristic is, “dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.”

constitution has performed *nineteen* of the cures. Yet, even on this supposition, the doctor is fairly entitled to applause, by superintending the operations of nature, in such a manner as not to interrupt or contravene them. If the habit of body be good, and the strength properly supported, the physician's merit is wholly negative, respecting *specific* medicines, in relieving a present complaint.

HAVING, it is hoped, given the reader a favourable impression of the use of vesicatorial applications to the feet, in *all* gouty cases, it becomes the writer's duty to obviate, as far as he can, any *material* objections that may be made to his doctrine. I think they are reducible to *two*.—First, That blisters may occasion a dangerous flux of humours to the part; and, secondly, that they may open a sore or ulcer, which will not *safely* admit of being closed or dried up. There is more plausibility than truth in these objections. With regard to the first, it need only be observed, that if peccant humours exist in the constitution, the sooner they are brought to
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a particular spot and discharged, the better. The longer they are allowed to circulate in the common mass of fluids, the greater will be their power by acrimony to vitiate these fluids, and to accumulate by assimilation. In consequence of this, should a person be attacked some years afterwards with dangerous visceral obstructions, or fever, it would be small matter of comfort to him, that he had before escaped a month's confinement, from a sore on his leg or his foot. It is a common mistake, that vesicatories discharge sound as well as unsound juices. After suppuration has taken place, nothing can keep up the formation and discharge of purulent matter, but foul tainted humours. Where they abound, the discharge is always great, and often attended with bloody or dark-coloured sanies. Blisters do not generate this, but only solicit it by stimulation from all parts, and give it an outlet. When this sort of stuff ceases, the sore puts on a kindly appearance, looks clean and florid, and gradually closes and heals. Generally speaking, in gouty habits, no great flux of humours to the blistered part is to be

apprehended. Had there been a large accumulation of such in the constitution, instead of the gout, a fever, or some erysipelatous tumour, abscess, imposthume, or eruption on the skin, would have happened. Gouty habits, as already has been observed, are always the soundest and purest of any.

THOSE constitutions that are unable to form the Gout, are, for the most part, liable to scorbutic eruptions of the body, or erysipelatous swellings of the limbs.* In real
gouty

* In many cases of this kind, ignorant and presumptuous apothecaries take upon them to let blood, (the most sacred operation in medical science) administer repeated purgatives, and after these are utterly at a loss either to *judge* or to *prescribe*. The reason is plain. Apothecaries should *sell* drugs, not prescribe them. They are only drug-merchants, and have no more right to *impose* their merchandize upon people, than a shop-keeper has to commence a minister of state, or a pedlar to step into the trade of the East-India Company. From the Erysipelas, or Scurvy, being repelled by desiccative applications, assisted internally by the frequent exhibition of drastic purges, I have seen very dangerous consequences ensue. I have been often called in to take care of patients almost put beyond the reach of prudent management, by the rashness and blunders of the apothecary, and always found it a matter of tedious difficulty to bring the disorder back again to the external parts. Yet, strange to tell! the very apothecary, who has committed

gouty cases, therefore, which are easily distinguishable from all others by the sensible practitioner, no derivation of humours to be apprehended will ever happen in consequence of blistering. Whatever happens, I do venture to affirm, it will abundantly reward the patient's sufferings, by relieving and lightening his constitution. Nor are his sufferings beyond the ordinary degree of patience, and not to be compared with the pitching, gnawing, vellicating tortures of the *unassisted* Gout. It is wonderful, what relief is immediately experienced on the blister being fairly risen. The tension and excruciating stretch of the parts is taken off; and the limb can change its postures, and bear to be touched, without an increase of torment. In most cases, however, there is a recurrence of twitches, or shooting pains, for eight or ten days, but they are short and very endurable. When a copious

mitted the mistake, will repeat it the very first call he has, notwithstanding the scriptural injunction against murder, and the admonitions of the physician. This chiefly happens in country towns, where no physician usually resides, and where apothecaries, especially those *in years*, look upon themselves as perfect Hippocrates's, in knowledge and experience.

ous proper digestion comes on, they vanish altogether : so that the extreme violence of the Gout, which, left to itself, used to last some weeks, in this way does not exceed two or three days in duration. The pain of keeping the foot or limb open by occasional applications of the epispastic ointment, (reduced three or four degrees below the *official* strength) is not to be mentioned, compared with the satisfaction that cannot but be the consequence of patients' observing the *real matter* of Gout daily carried out of the system, by the discharge of pus or sanies ; whence, if the sore be kept in a running state for a reasonable time, there is a full security against any dregs of the fit remaining in the habit, either to weaken or cripple the convalescent's limb during the interval, or to lay up fuel for the more furious accension of a future fit. The *reasonable time* will never be mistaken, by the accurate physician. In general, it may be truly said, that keeping the blister open a little time longer than is *merely* necessary, will be attended with no bad effects ; whereas drying it too soon may, by leaving part of the
arthritic

arthritic acrimony undischarged. Of the two extremes, the former would seem eligible on every account. As to the proper parts to be blistered, I would recommend the upper surface of the foot, or immediately under the calf of the leg, in the inside. After the sore is made, it may be alternately dressed with Emp. Attrah. and the Unguent. Epispast. let down three degrees. It consists officially of blistering-plaster and hog's-lard, half and half; four of the latter and one of the former, make a mildly irritating digestive dressing. In cases of great pain, inflammation, and tension, (which rarely happen) soft poultices, of boiled bread-and-milk and oil, may be occasionally applied with good success.

OBVIATING the first objection to blistering, in some measure anticipates the second. If there be no accumulation of humours in the part, there can be no danger of a lasting sore or ulcer. Even should a constant running or oozing happen, the arthritic patient is to be felicitated who has it, as it will infallibly preserve him from a return of his disorder,

disorder, with a small portion of gentle treatment on his part, scarcely amounting to more than the care necessary to be observ'd in cutting a *corn*, or dressing a seton or an issue. Should it run all his life, he has a chance of being free from the Gout all his life ; a sufficient remuneration, surely, for a little extra attention !

I HAVE known little pipes or sinuses, kept open for years in different parts of the foot, with remarkable good effects, particularly in the heel, and under the ball of the big toe. Such gentle drains are easily managed, and only require some soft digestive dressing. A mild inodorous sort of fluid, resembling cream in colour and consistence, is generally what is thrown out by these channels. It seems certain, that this creamlike liquid, by being detained, and its thinner parts absorbed or dissipated, is the origin of those chalky concretions, which first obstruct, and then indurate the joints. How reasonable then to give it a discharge in its fluid state, and thereby prevent those hard concretions which never fail to render the patient a cripple for life !

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WITH regard to the process of blistering in the Gout, I am aware of being unsupported by the writings or practice of modern physicians. It is true, in most systems of physic, we find it mentioned, as one of the catalogued remedies for this disorder; but in such a way as rather to discountenance the use of it, than otherwise. Dr. Cadogan condemns it, without assigning any reason of sufficient weight.* It is evident he has not given it a fair trial, consequently, has no right to pronounce its inutility. The authors who have animadverted on this elegant writer are also silent on the subject. Dr. Falconer, of Bath, introduces, and appears to adopt, Hoffman's admonition, "*Primum monendi sunt podagrici ne ullo modo corpus medicamento affligant.*"† All these writers have shewn much ingenuity

* Dissertation on the Gout, pages 74, and 84. Third Edition.

† Observations on Dr. Cadogan, &c. page 80.

This last-mentioned Gentleman has this expression (page 11) 'I am well convinced that diseases are incident to human nature.' Does Dr. Falconer speak his opinion here as a philosopher, or as an *Orthodox* Christian? As the former, he cannot believe that diseases have been hereditary to the species from Adam; therefore, he

ingenuity in the minutiae of investigation; have gone through all the articles of food and drink, with critical precision, but have left the subject *essentially* as embarrassed as formerly. Deep hypothetical reasoning, about an object of common sense, cannot but lead astray. The podagral Gout is visible to the eye, is of the phlegmon kind, but not so near the surface (like common phlegmons) as to break the skin, therefore it calls upon art, and solicits a discharge.

THE lower orders of the faculty, likewise, I have known to be quite alarmed and intimidated at the very mention of opening a fore on gouty limbs; those very men who will boldly undertake the conduct of *fevers* (the most dangerous of all disorders) at the most important time, that is, at the beginning, when

he must believe in *original sin*, and that excess and intemperance are incident to mankind. But if diseases are incident to human nature, so are doctors: of course it follows, that doctors are a part of the *punishment* (I wish I could call it a small part) annexed to the original transgression; and that as long as *original sin* lasts, doctors will last. Before Dr. Falconer informed me, I had no idea of physicians being so high up in antiquity.

when there is the greatest occasion for the expert and sagacious physician.* Yet, respecting the external management of the Gout, by blistering, these willing practitioners stand aghast with terror and dismay. It is acknowledged, somewhat to abate our surprise, that few medicines will be necessary during the progress of blistering. One excellence of this method is, that it supercedes the use of precarious drugs, especially *all alteratives*, which are the most absurd class of medicines in the world, the most disappointing to patients, and the most lucrative to apothecaries. In prospect of *these* altering the nature of the diseased animal juices, and regenerating the corrupted mass of blood, the under-strappers of medical science will drive you back in a moment the erysipelas, the scurvy, the cancer, or any other outward critical

* For to take up a right idea of a disorder at first, and to set forward in a judicious mode of treatment accordingly, is the sum of medical practice. If bleeding, vomiting, and purging, have been instituted, not to mention the topsy-turvy exhibition of what are called the capital officials, before the physician is sent for, (which is commonly the case) is not his frequent want of success easily accounted for? The original complaint has been fatally disguised or altered by the apothecary's adventurous and hurrying treatment.

critical disease. It is only taking so many draughts, so many powders, so many boxes of pills, and they will indemnify you from a return of the disorders now specified. Our *more* than *Galens* are right: they never return. Instead of them life is quickly shortened by a fit of the apoplexy or palsy, jaundice, dropsy, or œdematous putrefaction of the humours. It is a melancholy reflection, that the Art of Healing is like the art of banking or merchandizing: the more that can be got by it the better. Considerations arising from philosophical sensibility, or religious convictions, can never be supposed to affect minds absorbed in the love of money, whose idol is gold, and whose god is their belly.

THE process now recommended, though it effectually and expeditiously cures, I may say eradicates, a present fit, possesses no power to anticipate or prevent a future one. To do this, would be to act on a thing not existing; for after the termination of a perfect fit, *thus managed*, the constitution is as free of gout as if it never had had it. The Gout is to be considered

considered in analogy with other complaints of a periodical kind. I here particularly mean swellings and eruptions of the erysipelatous and scorbutic kind; asthma, hæmorrhoids, &c. Upon the disappearance of these, after having had their effect, the patient's juices are entirely free of erysipelas, scurvy, &c. Why the foul acrid humours of the human body should be thrown off, sometimes by gout, sometimes by erysipelas, sometimes by hæmorrhoids, sometimes by fevers, &c. &c. must be resolved into a peculiarity of frame and stamina. I have even known these several disorders convertible into each other, and supplying one another's place, with equal relief to the constitution: which proves, that accident, as well as the original tone and texture of the parts, is not unfrequently concerned. But it is a point of moment gained, that the most violent attack of the Gout is, almost totally, carried off by blistering, or rather, that the irritation from the flies is the only pain felt; which, in comparison with the tortures of the Gout, may be rather called a cessation of pain, than a continuance of it;

not to mention the certain prevention of chalky indurations. During the whole operation of blistering, the appetite is good, and the spirits alert, contrary to what happens in the unassisted Gout; and, generally speaking, the patient passes the night easily; indeed as well as can reasonably be expected, considering he is constantly in a state of rest, either in his chair or bed, and doing little or nothing, through the day, to bring on a disposition to sleep.

I AM hereby brought to make some remarks on *diet*, and the use of *opiates* in this disorder; which I shall do as briefly as possible, considering that this pamphlet has already swelled to a large size, and that two cases, illustrative of the writer's practice, yet remain to be introduced.

WITH respect to diet, I would almost enjoin no restrictions. In general, I would allow patients to eat and drink what they have been most accustomed to, consequently, what they will always take with the least disgust, and
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chance of indigestion. Whatever the appetite longs for, amounts to an instinct which ought not to be suppressed. The stomach will never be distressed with what it takes in with avidity and pleasure. This sort of spontaneous desire is a silent declaration of nature, that she is sufficiently able to carry perfectly, through, the operations of assimilation, digestion, and chylicification. Food otherwise taken into the stomach, is against her consent, therefore can never have her kindly assistance, to convert it into wholesome chyle and nourishment; and without her assistance, indigestion, crudities, flatulencies, and spasms, will ever be the consequence. I would, however, make this observation; that the firmer and the more generous the diet is, the better. The stomach can lay hold of articles within this description, and operate properly upon them, by the muscular force of its coats, and the effusion of its juices: whereas all greasy slops, jellies, creams, &c. elude the action of this important viscus, continue unmixt and unassimilated with these juices, relax and weaken its fibres, and remain a load to be protruded by

the help of purgative medicines. A variety also of aliments, provided they are of this kind, is rather favourable than otherwise to the process of digestion. The only danger arises from excess in quantity. The constructive powers of the stomach are equal to a certain proportion of solid food: beyond this, they are too much stretched, of course weakened, and rendered incapable of re-contracting. No man can be mistaken in his *quantum sufficit*, who has, in a few instances, attended to what his stomach *can do*. If he overpowers its digestive faculty, by taking as much at two meals as might have served for three, every man of sense may prejudge the consequence.—Good sound table-beer, thoroughly hopped and boiled, so as to have parted with its viscosity, would seem the best of all drinks at dinner. After it, I would recommend any *pure* spirit, with its proportion of water that has boiled, rendered agreeable with sugar, but without acid; the modern unrestrained use of which is one principal cause of the many latent lingering disorders that are every day increasing among us,
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and which we cannot reduce to any certain type. Port wine, as generally drank, (and it is astonishing what quantities are daily drunk) is, for the most part, in a state of *sickness* or *fermentation*, therefore totally unfit to mix with the aliments and juices of the stomach. With regard to the proportion of generous liquor to be indulged in after dinner, every man must judge for himself. It should never be below an agreeable elevation, but always *observably* short of ebriety. It is a mistake, surely, that what is called *drinking* brings on the Gout. Genuine liquors pass off freely by all the emunctories. Their very fluidity prevents them from staying, to be the cause of congestion or obstruction. Nay, their action in the stomach and first passages stimulates and promotes every salutary secretion. No one ever knew a dram-drinker subject to the Gout. This I do not remark, to encourage dram-drinking; but merely to prove, that it is not the use of spirits; either moderately or immoderately taken, which produces the Gout. That sort of pungent redundancy, which is the parent of this dreaded

disease, arises from rich gross food ; fauces, jellies, pickles, and spices ; first of all loading the *primæ viæ*, and then passing crude and unsubdued into the general aggregate of fluids, by which the natural secretions are interrupted, and the capillaries choaked up.

OPIATES are next to be considered. The *salutary* effects of *these* are, to allay pain and procure sleep : the prejudicial, to excite heat, thirst, nausea, relaxation, languor, &c. In cases of extreme pain and wakefulness, the temporary inconveniencies of narcotics must be overlooked, and a quantity, proportionate to the urgency of the occasion, fearlessly be administered. If exhibited with a timid, miserly hand, anodynes increase the symptoms they are intended to relieve. The common exhibition of *Laudanum* is in a draught, made of some simple distilled water, with other ingredients ; the efficacy of the opiate is thus diminished, and the expected sedative effect frustrated : For instance, if 30 drops are prescribed in a vehicle consisting of three ounces, the effect will not be equal to *ten drops* swallowed

lowed by themselves; of course, a disappointment both to the physician and patient, perhaps in some critical situation, will be the natural consequence.* The form I generally prescribe it in, is a simple one, as every thing in physic ought to be, as far as possible. The vehicle is an ounce of any plain syrup, (mostly the Syr. Caryophyll. on account of its agreeable taste, and elegant colour,) a drachm of the Tinct. Thebaïac. and a drachm of Spir. Sal. Ammon. dul. to render the opiate light on the stomach. Three tea spoonfuls of this agreeable *anodyne syrup*, taken about half an hour before the patient goes to bed, will perfectly answer all common occasions. To prevent, however, its constipating effect on

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* This mistake, of mixing powerful remedies with what weakens them, is not confined to opiates. Emetics, by the due operation of which many disorders are checked in embryo, have been taken to no purpose, or to a bad one. Before the coats of the stomach have been sufficiently irritated, to produce that ejection of its contents we call vomiting, basins of tepid-water, or chamomile-tea, have been repeatedly swallowed; by which the stomach is intolerably distended, its contractile power destroyed, and the patient forced to use feathers, and every other foreign provocative, to be relieved from the pain and distress of his situation.

the bowels, I always recommend some not disagreeable liquid purgative, to be taken early in the morning, which, towards the evening, seldom fails to operate kindly. My favourite medicine is the following, of which two or three table spoonfuls will be a sufficient quantity.

R Infus. Senæ. Limoniat. unc. quatuor.

Tinct. Sen. unc. duas.

Spir. Nit. dulc. drach. duas. M.

This acts notably, not only as a purgative, but as a diuretic ; a circumstance of particular consideration in gouty cases. Thirst apart, I never make it a point with a patient to drink, in consequence of having taken the cathartic draught. Large quantities of fluids, swallowed *systematically*, have the effect of relaxing the stomach and bowels, and weakening the operation of the medicine. Much disappointment follows the ingurgitation of liquids in this way. If the constitution does not demand them, by the indication of thirst, they always distend, load, and oppress.

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I HAVE now said all that I intended, on the Gout. I did not think it necessary to enter into deep hypothetical reasoning on a subject which is, in my judgment, obvious to common sense. Should I find it expedient to do so afterwards, in justice to myself and my argument, I shall not neglect any advantage it may appear to put in my power. At the same time, it will be with reluctance I shall be induced to launch out into theory. I have no object but the investigation of truth ; and rather run the risk of contracting, than extending my line of business, by this publication.—He who speaks out with regard to *apothecaries*, (and every man of spirit and liberal education ought) will be always sure to make enemies of the conceited and ignorant among them. The sensible and candid I respect, and am sure of having as my friends. Half a dozen of these, with half a dozen patients, I would prefer to an hundred of another description, with a patient to each. To procure patients at the expence of stooping to benefit apothecaries, by sending a load of pompous, useless prescriptions to their shops, which my patients

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ents *must* swallow, is a mode of making money not on my list of *desideranda*.—Nor was it possible for me to write on the Gout, without being pointed in my remarks on Pharmacopolists. They have such multitudes of chronic cases continually on their hands, most of which originate from a lurking or ill-treated Gout, which their betters in the profession have taught them fashionably to call *nervous* and *bilious*, that they unavoidably came in my way. I should not otherwise have sought them out. Their common method of treating such invalids, is at once lucrative to the one, and pernicious to the other. The strongest spiritous mixtures of the shop, nervous tinctures, and hysteric draughts, are regularly taken for months and years; whereby the stomach becomes so habituated to artificial heat and invigoration, that it loses its natural feelings and tone. Without them, it feels cold, relaxed, and oppressed with flatulent distentions and spasms. Every bottle of apothecary's cordial lays a foundation for another, till the unfortunate *dram-drinker* cannot exist without it. The only difference between dram-drinkers
of

of this class, and *common* ones, is, that the *liquors* they use come from the apothecary's, and those of the latter from the gin-shop.—*Medical dram-drinking* is much more dangerous than the vulgar use of spirits; for the habit is contracted under the sanction of science and learned advice. Musk, camphor, aromatics, bitters, gums, balsams, essential oils, &c. do not alter the nature of the proof and rectified spirits they are mixt with; nor do the utmost virtues of the former half so much good, as the habitual use of the latter does irreparable harm. The constitutions that have a *temporary* relief from them, are all of the gouty kind, from some concealed, deep-seated acrid humour, probably of the erysipelatous or scorbutic kind. How dangerous then must that practice be, which prevents it from coming out in some topical paroxysm or critical eruption! And how easily accounted for the many sudden and unexpected deaths we hear of, from this one mistaken principle of practice! The Gout periodically attacking the joints, or dissipated in rashes and efflorescences of the skin, is the preservation of life, and re-
novator.

novator of health : but when coaxed with *alteratives*, and suppressed, it often in a moment terminates life, or produces a train of inward maladies, which render death desirable.

I BEG it may be understood that, in the foregoing free strictures, I allude to no particular person : my objects are *things*, not *persons*. A practice that is found among the lowest and worst of mankind, attacking *private characters*, would ill become the dignity of science, or the noble spirit of philosophy. After this intimation, should any *professional reader* make self-applications, he must be accountable to himself for them. The preservation of life, and the conservation of health, are objects too momentous, to have injustice done them, from dread of offending persons who conceive the offence from *knowledge of themselves*, and the recurrence of memory to events, which have involved families and neighbourhoods in sudden affliction and distress !——But to end with the cases.

TWO CASES *of the* GOUT, *treated*
on the foregoing plan.

C A S E F I R S T.

THE first case I shall take the liberty of mentioning, is my own, being prior in time to the other. At an early period of life, my constitution was superintended with such scrupulous attention, that I became delicate, though not unhealthy. My mother adopted the notion, that vegetable, not animal food, was the properest for persons in the younger stages of life ; that the former laid no foundation for disorders, but that the latter did. This notion, though an erroneous one, in our cold, damp, invariable climate, was not peculiar to her. It is a general notion, first taken up on no principle, and afterwards propagated and inforced, as error and folly commonly are,
by

by habit and fashion. But to do a piece of justice to an excellent parent, (for which the reader of sensibility will not condemn me) let it be observed, that she had a particular reason for the management of her children. Her family* (a numerous one) had been all prematurely cut off, as was asserted by the physicians, by *putrid livers*. She herself fell a sacrifice, as was believed, to the same hereditary complaint, before I was capable to judge of it, or to feel the misfortune of losing her. It was natural enough for her to conclude, therefore, that by bringing up her children on a *low, spare* diet, she should counteract the morbid indisposition which was presumed to have made such havock among her dearest relations. What she intended well, however, turned out of fatal consequence to three of her daughters. Had I not originally been of robuster stamina, and pretty early situated to attend to *medical effects*, I should have gone the same family road with the three who went before me, in all probability. In the first year I attended the University of Edinburgh, I was
-attacked

* Lord C——'s.

attacked by a nervous fever, of the worst kind, which lasted six weeks, and from which I recovered, under Divine Providence, by the care and skill of the late Dr. Rutherford,* one of my first revered medical masters. I recovered slowly, but effectually, by retiring to the country, and relinquishing my studies for that season. My critical escape put me into a train of thinking, relative to my constitution. I was led to conclude, that rigid abstemiousness is not temperance, and that living extremely low brings on disorders of the most lingering and dangerous kind. I changed my manner of life, and, from many years' experience, am convinced, I did change it for the better. I indulged in animal meat of all kinds, restricted myself in vegetables, and *drank* generously of wine, contrary to my usual custom. I commenced student again, and enjoyed perfect health for a long time after I had taken my degree, and had quitted Edinburgh; a city I shall never remember but with gratitude and affection.

ABOUT

* Then Professor of the practice of Physic; a fine scholar, one of the first physicians of his time, and an excellent man!

ABOUT seven years ago, I was seized with tedious complaints in my stomach, and about the hepatic region. I took a variety of medicines, but with no other advantage than causing my disorder often to shift from the stomach to the vertebræ of the loins, thigh-bones, and knees. From its shifting quarters, and often moving with quick transitions, I concluded my real disorder was the Gout. I refrained from all drugs, except sometimes Pill. Rufi, or Pill. Aromat. and had my legs blistered. The consequence was, very soon, a fair fit of the Gout, which went entirely off, when the blisters had done their duty, and left me in possession of God's greatest blessing, *perfect health*, and the use of my limbs. Since that, I have had three attacks of the same kind, which I treated in the same way, and with the same success. Indeed I may say with greater, as every subsequent fit has been less and less severe, and for two years past I have been totally free of all complaints of the kind. Indeed it is proper to observe, that I live with regularity; simple in my diet, but steady to a certain quantity of the best liquor.

What

What I mean is, such a quantity as *elevates*, without in any degree *intoxicating*. Taken with a reference to this medium, liquors, if old and sound, are *the inward cloathing of the body*, in our foggy damp atmosphere.

ONE general remark may be made on the foregoing case, viz. that a constitution may be so altered in the course of a few years, by regimen, as really not to be the same it originally was.

C A S E S E C O N D.

THE Rev. Dr. LILL was my patient, about five months ago,* in Bath. He is subject to the Gout, as he mentioned to me, by hereditary right, contrary to my hypothesis. It is a plausible opinion, has a *family look*, and will never want advocates, even among men of sense. As I cannot express myself to better advantage, than in the doctor's own words, I hope he will pardon me for using them. His

L

narrative

* November, 1778.

narrative is as follows : “ I have had the Gout
 “ smartly above twenty years. My grand-
 “ father was troubled with it, and, I believe,
 “ died of it. My father never had it, but
 “ died of a suppression of urine, supposed to
 “ proceed from stone and gravel.* The in-
 “ tervals between the two or three first fits
 “ of Gout I had, were distant from each other
 “ about two years and nine months. I have
 “ kept an account of the different attacks
 “ since one in April 1764, and have it now
 “ before me. It was two months before I
 “ recovered the entire strength of my feet and
 “ legs in this fit.

“ June 1766, I had a slight fit, which did
 “ not confine me: it was in the right great
 “ toe, and left instep.

“ Aug. 1769, I was attacked while bath-
 “ ing at the sea. I returned home, and, by
 “ the advice of a navy surgeon, I applied a
 “ rye-meal poultice, which had a surprizing
 “ good effect for the present, by removing
 “ the

* Most probably originating from a gouty cause.

“ the pain, which allowed me to rest : but
 “ upon the 27th of the same month, it re-
 “ turned with double violence ; seized my
 “ right foot, both my hands and wrists,
 “ where I had never been troubled with it
 “ before. I was above two months confined.

“ April 1771, I had a smart fit, which,
 “ though not so violent as the last, occasioned
 “ as great and long a weakness in my limbs.

“ April 1773, a fit began with a pain in
 “ the heel, for the first time. By poulticing
 “ and opening it, it discharged a substance
 “ like *cream*. The pain spread to every limb,
 “ not sparing the elbows. By getting too
 “ soon on horseback, I relapsed, and was
 “ worse than at the beginning of the fit.—
 “ My heel was so inflamed and painful, as to
 “ prevent sleep 24 hours. I was relieved by
 “ poultices, which were kept on five weeks.
 “ It discharged much white stuff. I was con-
 “ fined to my room eleven weeks.

“ June 1775, had a slight fit. Heel very
 “ painful, and, when opened, discharged
 “ much gouty white stuff, which gave ease.

“ March 1776, had a fit brought on by a
 “ fall in the frost. It attacked my hands, feet,
 “ knees, elbows, &c. I was near a month
 “ turned in my bed with a sheet. Went out
 “ in the carriage April following.

“ February 1777, had a severe fit, at Bath,
 “ which continued near a month. Went in
 “ a sedan-chair, in a very cold day, about the
 “ Crescent; caught cold, and two days after
 “ was attacked. Went out in a carriage
 “ March 27th following. In this fit I was
 “ much troubled with the heartburn. Was
 “ relieved by drinking warm tar-water, from
 “ which I always found benefit in the Gout.
 “ —At Bath, November 1778, the last fit
 “ began.”

UPON being seized with this last fit, the
 doctor sent for me, having known my manner
 of treating the Gout before. I found him in
 bed, and under the apprehension of a severe
 and tedious fit. He resolutely adopted my
 plan as soon as proposed. I applied blisters
 to the upper part of his feet, and took mea-
 sures

fures to renew the discharge of his heel, which had been closed for some time, but exquisitely tender to the touch, and evidently inclosing much cretaceous obstruction. The blisters rose, and discharged well. His pain from tension, &c. was sensibly abated. He could suffer his legs and feet to be gently handled, and could, with small assistance, change postures ; which had not been the case in former attacks. I gave him no medicines but warm bitters of the purgative kind, and for the first few nights, an opiate, which procured him sleep. I also found it necessary to blister the inside of the left arm near the wrist, as, together with his feet, it was severely attacked. The heel also, by proper applications, was opened, and discharged much of a thick creamy sort of substance. This process was carried on with steadiness for three weeks. My patient's fortitude never failed him. Indeed he often expressed himself happily convinced, that the pain of blistering is scarcely felt, in comparison with the racking tortures of the Gout. His spirits and appetite were good all the time, and he enjoyed his friends

every day, with that good-humour and pleasantness which are natural to him.—The weakness of his knees and ancles, however, is still his matter of complaint; and, I am afraid, will while he lives. I should be truly happy to say otherwise, could I say so, and be honest. Every fit he has had, has left his joints more and more disabled with cretaceous obstruction and rigidity. Hence the feebleness of his limbs, and his incapacity of using that exercise he formerly was fitted for, and delighted in. I except the last fit in this remark. The gouty humour was then discharged in the first stage, before it had time to stagnate and settle in the lacunæ, ligaments, and membranes of the joints. Had his first fits been treated in the same way, he would now have had the perfect use of his limbs. All that can be done in future, will be to prevent any farther accumulation of chalky sediment; which can always be done by the mode of treatment he has lately undergone with so much constancy.

I HAVE had the favour of a letter from this gentleman lately, dated Bath, April 8th,

1779.

1779. He informs me, “ that his heel continues to discharge, but that his knees and “ ankle-joints are extremely weak.” The first, if it be kept open, and invited to throw out its contents, will, probably, preserve my worthy patient from future attacks of the Gout, at least severe ones ; because, when it pitches to the foot, it will there find a passage and a conductor. The last can never be effectually remedied without a renovation of joints, ligaments, membranes, &c. The doctor, likewise, submits three particulars to my determination, suggested by his apothecary ; the expediency of *cooling physic, bathing,* and getting *twelve strokes of the pump on each knee, twice a week.* As my answer is connected with the general subject of this pamphlet, I shall take the liberty to subjoin it, and so conclude. It is contained in the two following paragraphs : —

“ IT will be your misfortune, my dear
 “ friend, to look forward to any period, when
 “ you shall have the entire use of your limbs.
 “ The weakness you lament, is the effect of
 “ former

“ former fits ; arises from rigidity ; and this
 “ again from chalky concretions, which can
 “ never be removed, as they are incapable of
 “ being loosened, attenuated, and absorbed.
 “ Bathing, and strokes from the pump, may
 “ be an *amusement* ; but till they give you
 “ new joints, new knees, and new ancles,
 “ they will *only* amuse. To weakness from
 “ sudden paralytic contraction, or temporary
 “ spasmodic constriction, these may be effec-
 “ tually applied. In your case, nothing but
 “ gentle motion from exercise, and flannel
 “ wrapt round your knees, will ever be of
 “ service.”

“ WITH respect to the other particular
 “ referred to me, I would observe, that *cooling*
 “ *physic* is an arbitrary term : cooling *physic*
 “ may have *warming* effects ; and warming
 “ *physic* *cooling* effects. Many gouty and
 “ rheumatic patients are treated with fa-
 “ line mixtures, and neutral purging salts.
 “ What is the consequence ? Why—perio-
 “ dical accessions of symptomatic fever, and
 “ great internal heat. How is this accounted
 “ for ?

“ for ? Easily. Such medicines are sure to
 “ relax, to weaken the stomach and bowels ;
 “ whereby the gouty or rheumatic acrimony
 “ is diffused through the system, but parti-
 “ cularly solicited to the internal parts, in-
 “ stead of being concentrated to a point, by
 “ forming the *podagral Gout*.——The art of
 “ physic is injured by not taking a liberal and
 “ comprehensive view of it. Instead of this,
 “ practitioners are carried away by the *sound*
 “ of terms, from the *properties* of things; and
 “ prescribe to the *name* of a disorder, instead
 “ of prescribing to the *nature* of it.”

It may be necessary to add, that, instead of
 two, I might have adduced *twenty* cases, to
 support and recommend the practice of *Blis-*
tering in the Gout. I have them by me,
 attended with a great variety of anomalous
 symptoms, which tended to disguise, but not
 to alter the nature of the disorder. Such is
 my opinion of the safety and utility of the
 practice, that I am convinced many lives, va-
 luable to the state and to society, might have
 been, and may be saved, by a resolute trial of
Blistering,

Blistering, instead of medicines poured into the stomach, *according to art*, which have failed ten thousand times. Hurt it cannot do, if the constitution is not *rotten*: good it has a general chance of doing. However, I submit myself, for better information, to the *experienced* and liberal critic.

F I N I S.

ERRATA.—Page xxv, line 5 from bottom, before heart, read *bis*. Page xxxi, line 4 from the top, after enlarged, read *upon*. Page xxxviii, line 10 from the bottom, dele *but*. Page xl, last paragraph, for Capters, read *Chapters*. Page 43, line 5 from the top, for thouht, read *thought*. Page 66, line 6 from the top, for miserrim ecruciantur, read *miserrime cruciantur*. Page 77, line 4 from the bottom, for int he, read *in the*. Page 78, line 5 from the bottom, before are, insert *they*. Page 95, line 11 from the top, dele *vers*. Page 101, line 10 from the bottom, dele *f* in *paroxysm*. Page 106, line 6 from the bottom, for bocome, read *become*. Page 132, line 4 from the top, (Note) for anamolous, read *anomalous*. Page 157, line 4 from the bottom, for invariable, read *variable*. Page 160, line 11 from the top, for Pill. twice, read *Pil.*

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